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QUIDS AND QUOS

AFTER the vast publicity given to the Church House hearings, the rumours, sedulously fostered, of corruption in the Cabinet, the anonymous letters and whispering campaigns designed to suggest that even the Civil Service must be undermined by Socialism—after so great a preparation and all the high hopes of a lovely scandal at first entertained at Tory Headquarters, the quiet sanity of the Lynskey Report must be something of an anti-climax. Every man and woman of goodwill, in every political party, rejoices that it is so. The upshot of a thorough inquiry, which thought no avenue too crooked to explore, is that no evidence of positive corruption has been discovered. No member of the Cabinet is involved. One Junior Minister and one public servant are held to have been unduly influenced in the pursuit of their duties. That is all. A great many "quids," it is true, have been offered; but very few "quos" have been given in exchange. The spiv world has barely touched political Westminster, and not even smeared the robes of departmental Whitehall.

The Report settles three reputations. Mr. Stanley—a man who, as it says, "will make any statement, whether true or untrue, if he thinks it to his advantage to do so"—has become fixed in the public mind as the archetype of the most dangerous, because least disagreeable, class of "contact man." Having successfully lived on a large and curiously acquired income for twenty years since he was made an undischarged bankrupt, Mr. Stanley, if allowed to remain in this country and at liberty, will no doubt continue to find ways of being comfortable at the expense of simple-minded people. If all else failed, he could always make a fortune as a music-hall artist.

The Tribunal has taken a severe view of the conduct of both Mr. Belcher and Mr. Gibson. It has refused, even when it seemed possible, to give them the benefit of the doubt. We note particularly its opinion that, in the case of the Sherman prosecution, Mr. Belcher's decision to discontinue the action was "made at the suggestion and under the influence of Mr. Stanley and because of the obligations Mr. Belcher felt he owed to Mr. Stanley." It would have been equally possible, it seems to us, for the Tribunal to say that Mr. Belcher was clearly relieved to find in the Department's file on the case sufficient disagreement or hesitation on the part of legal experts to enable him to take a decision that would be appreciated by his friends. If that sounds to some people like a distinction without a difference, it is because we all agree that Mr. Belcher should not have had such friends.

Labour in the past has suffered much from the "aristocratic embrace." In the case of the late Mr. J. H. Thomas, it suffered from the embrace of big business. Mr. Belcher has the humiliation of having been caught in the spiv's embrace. He wrote his own political epitaph when he remarked that he was a man who was unable to say No. He seems to have been unable to say No to a drink, or to a whole case of whisky, or to the corresponding requests for favours from his benefactors. There is no evidence, however, that he was in any real sense "corrupt," and he received no sums of money in exchange for his favours. He fell for luxury, for tawdry "good time" society. He and Mr. Gibson were casualties of their times: in the peculiarly difficult and seductive circumstances of the half-way house towards Socialism, they could not maintain that standard of honour and integrity which was rightly required of them.

One point of singular interest cannot escape Mr. Attlee's attention. Just how great are the responsibilities of a Parliamentary Under-Secretary? It is useless to say, as Sir John Anderson has done, that important decisions should never be left to them. In point of fact, a busy Minister may have to leave to a junior colleague the job of deciding on a matter the routine of which has devolved on him. When this happens, what is the Junior Minister's position? Since he is not protected by the doctrine of joint Cabinet responsibility, ought the Minister to take the blame if his Parliamentary Under-Secretary makes a mistake, as he would if a similar error is made by a permanent Civil Servant?

There is another point in which it appears to us that the Tribunal might well have made a more careful distinction. In these days of congested departmentalism it is inevitable that those who personally know Ministers or Civil Servants will endeavour to use their influence to push their cases to the head of the queue. This occurs, and inevitably occurs, whatever party is in power, in every Department. No Minister can avoid giving priority to cases in which he is personally interested. Where he knows the facts from personal information, he will inevitably act more speedily than in other cases where all the details have to be gathered from the usual channels.

Many similar points of interest will strike the reader of the Lynskey Report. But the main conclusions will not be shaken by any detailed criticism. It is an able and satisfactory document, the upshot of which is to free both the Government and the Civil Service from gross and often malicious attacks made upon them and to throw light on a strange world which exaggerates and caricatures all the qualities of capitalism. No one ever showed more private enterprise than Mr. Stanley; no one was more sure that private profit was public advantage. In the circumstances we doubt whether any political party will seek to make propaganda out of the Report. If this proves true, Britain will be the gainer.

Next Steps in China

The Communists will celebrate the Chinese New Year in Nanking. Their victory has earned them the right to state their own peace terms, and the Eight Points put forward by Mao Tse-tung last week form a basis for discussion which the Nanking Government's peace mission would do well to take seriously. The Communists have now agreed to accept this mission with the exception of one of its members, who is unacceptable since he is on their list of "arch war criminals." President Li Tsung-jen has little to offer except surrender. Chiang Kai-shek's exit from Nanking has been followed by many Chinese officials, who are making a mass scramble from their Ministries before the Communists can execute a mass purge. The result is panic and chaos in Nationalist Government offices; and although some skeleton of an administration may shortly be set up in Canton, it cannot secure the support of the people. The breakdown of the

Government also means the end of the Kuomintang. A Communist spokesman on the North Shensi radio has hinted that it will be barred from the "democratic coalition" Government which they are already discussing in Peking. This is not surprising: the Kuomintang stands for corruption, secret police and reaction; it has nothing to contribute to the country. The sooner foreign governments face the situation realistically the better. The Communists have said they desire friendly relations with foreign Powers. An indication from the British Government that it is ready to discuss cultural and economic co-operation with the new regime would be a politic gesture.

The Dutch in Difficulties

When the Dutch launched their second military campaign against the Indonesian Republic, they gambled on the hope that their troops would be able quickly to pacify the areas invaded and that stable economic conditions would ensue. They insisted that they had to restore order, and that only a handful of Jogjakarta extremists stood in the way of complete Indonesian co-operation with the Netherlands. Both events and their own statements have revealed the falsity of their case. Guerrilla activities have increased substantially in both Java and Sumatra. An Indian eye-witness told the Delhi Conference that whole areas of East and West Java are now under Republican control, while every day the list of destroyed estates in West Java and Sumatra grows longer. After two weeks of denials, Batavia radio had admitted the destruction of the huge Djambi oilfields. It is not a question of Communist leadership: the Sultan of Jogja has abdicated and joined one of the resistance groups. The Dutch, moreover, are having trouble with their puppets. They have arrested four members of the Pasundan parliament, which they sponsored, and, according to a report in the Socialist paper *Het Parool*, other Dutch Federal nominees are asking for Republican leadership. *Het Parool* adds that, in selecting representatives as negotiators with the Dutch, the Federal Council chose only two Federalists and eight Republicans—including Sjahrir, Soekarno and Hatta! Apart from this political set-back there are serious military difficulties facing the Dutch. General Spoor has stated in a press interview that the forces at his disposal are inadequate to secure the early pacification of the country against an unknown number of guerrillas. The Dutch forces are already greatly extended, and now, by promising to release forty thousand men from Indonesia to support Western Union, they have added to their military dilemma. There is no argument left, moral, physical or economic, for Dutch refusal to carry out the orders of the Security Council and the suggestions of the Asian Conference.

Western Union Dissension

Whatever progress may be made in co-ordinating national contributions to be made to the defence of Western Union, it seems unlikely that this week's meeting of Foreign Ministers will succeed in resolving the deadlock reached in the clash of British and French views over the Union's political structure. At last week's session of the Advisory Committee of the five Brussels Powers, the French delegation, led by Monsieur Herriot, urged in vain the establishment of a European Assembly composed of mixed Parliamentary delegations. Faithful to his brief from the Cabinet, Mr. Dalton insisted that if regular meetings of a Western Union Council of Ministers (to which Britain offered no objection) were to be supplemented by Assembly deliberations, then the Assembly must consist of delegations nominated by Governments, each casting only a single vote. Never officially explained, the motives behind this British attitude appear to be the reluctance of the Cabinet to risk having an Assembly in which the British delegation might include either Mr. Churchill or Mr. Piratin, or which might even join with other Parliamentary delegations in passing resolutions contrary to the British Government's desires. Since the proposed Assembly would in any case lack executive powers, the French, who are commenting bitterly on Britain's "unco-operative" attitude, see little force in these objections. It is felt in Paris that though the British Government may be realistic in arguing that only Governments can give military and economic effect to Western Union, the conception of unity will never take shape in the public mind unless a democratically constituted Assembly is created and allowed to vote on lines cutting across national frontiers.

Communist Economics

The "Molotov Plan" for Eastern Europe has been operating for many months, but it has now been belatedly formalised by the establishment of a "Council for Mutual Economic Aid" as the Communist counterpart of O.E.E.C. Designed to assist the integration of the economies of Eastern Europe and of the Soviet Union, it is willing to admit other European States—if they refuse to "subordinate themselves to the dictation of the Marshall Plan"—but excludes Yugoslavia. Undoubtedly, the Council can assist the Cominform's campaign against Tito by tightening the economic sanctions about which the Marshal complained last week in his speech to the Serbian Communist Congress. It may also help to iron out some of the discrepancies that have arisen in trade between the members of the Eastern Bloc. Now that this Council has been formed, moreover, it may not be so easy for individual States to make separate deals with Western Europe. Such pacts could become matters of high policy, which might have to be settled by negotiation between O.E.E.C. and the Council. This new body certainly sharpens the division of Europe. But its formation contrasts strangely with the line now being taken by Marcel Cachin and Togliatti. Both the French and Italian Communists are now calling for a settlement of Soviet-American differences by direct negotiation, insisting that the two systems can and should co-operate. M. Cachin went even further this week. "Unification of all nations for reconstruction is an excellent idea," he said, "and nobody questions that the American offer to help economies damaged by war is a great plan." His criticism of the Marshall Plan was that "it sometimes imposes political conditions on European countries that are too severe." These are mild remarks from the dean of French Communism. They coincide with reports that Varga, the Soviet economist who was rebuked last year for asserting that American capitalism was not hell-bent for catastrophe, took a leading part in the discussions preceding the formation of the new Council. The German Socialist Unity Party, meanwhile, continues its violent denunciation of the "imperialist warmongers" of the West.

MacArthur's Election

The Japanese electorate have made handsome amends for the failure of the American Republicans to nominate General MacArthur as their presidential candidate. At the general election this week, there was a landslide vote for the ultra-conservative Democratic Liberals, and—since this is the party that most closely resembles the General's political philosophy—for the policies of MacArthur himself. Naturally, at a moment when Kuomintang China has collapsed and the grip of the White nations is steadily being prised off East Asia, it is most satisfying for General MacArthur, the virtual dictator of Japan, to find that the Japanese have endorsed his policies. In a harsh and—the General must feel—often ungrateful world, the absolute majority secured by the Japanese extreme Right is a fit reward for an occupation regime which has been a cross between the Harding Administration and the Thomas Committee. It is difficult to share the General's pleasure. The Democrats lost fifty-six seats, but the Socialists met catastrophe, being reduced from one hundred and forty-three seats to a mere forty-nine. Some of these, clearly, went to the Communists, who formerly had but four seats and now, with thirty-five, closely rival the Socialists as spokesmen for the Japanese workers. The drastic reduction in the strength of the Centre parties is serious and is due, in part, to their attempt to reconcile two different aims. It has proved impossible for them to carry out social reforms urgently required and to appease General MacArthur at the same time. Japan may have gone back to normalcy; but is that what was wanted by the Powers which have had to fight her economically and militarily? The restoration of Japan has been dominated by conciliation of the old capitalist interests and by the desire to make the country a valuable base close to Red China and Red Siberia. But that, surely, is not the settlement the Allied Powers originally had in mind.

Anglo-Canadian Trade

The agreement now reached on the terms under which 140 million bushels of Canadian wheat will be supplied to Britain in the 1949–50 crop year are certainly favourable to this country. The price is, once again, to be two dollars a bushel—ten cents below the current Chicago quotation for December wheat "futures"—and the Canadian Government has assented to the gradual unfreezing of the unspent $235 million balance of Canada's 1945 loan to Britain. This can now be drawn upon at a rate sufficient to cover roughly half of our expenditure on Canadian wheat in the next twenty-four months. As for Canada's claim to receive, in 1948–50, compensation for the "loss" she made in shipping wheat to Britain at prices much below the world price level in 1946–48, the British Government re-affirms its recognition, in principle, of this liability; but the extent, and method of settlement, of the obligation will be the subject of further negotiations in 1950, when the results in practice of the whole four-year bulk contract will be available for review. Britain's balance of payments may then be such as to make more generous treatment of the Canadian farmer possible. Whether he, on his part, will be wholly satisfied with this deferment of hope is doubtful. The British Government might have been wise to offer, even at this stage, to prolong the four-year agreement for a further period.

Helping the Tenant

The Landlord and Tenant (Rent Control) Bill, which had its Second Reading this week, will afford some tenants much-need protection and redress at the cost of creating a serious anomaly. Hitherto the standard rent for property first let after September 1st, 1939, has been fixed at the rent charged at the time of first letting. That is why it has been possible to charge such heavy premiums and exorbitant rents for houses that have been converted into flats since the war; and also for newly let houses. Now, the same tribunal procedure which has worked so well in reducing the excessive rents of other accommodation is to be applied to flats and houses let for the first time since August, 1945. The great merit of the new system will be the possibility of recovering the whole or part of premiums already paid. Another sound provision in the Bill enables the tribunal to protect a tenant, who has applied for the recovery of his premium, from eviction on the grounds that he shares a part of his accommodation with the landlord. The Bill, however, does nothing for tenants who have purchased assignments of leases from outgoing tenants. Here Mr. Elliot and the Tories have a legitimate criticism. The Bill offers no redress for thousands who have been exploited; their misfortune is that it is technically possible to recover undue charges from a landlord still holding title, while to include former tenants who have extorted key-money would be to launch an interminable series of court actions, few of which could yield returns adequate to meet their cost.

PARLIAMENT: Palestine

Wednesday

The promised unveiling by Mr. Bevin of his policy produced a large number of spectators, anxious to see what lay beneath the shapeless wraps. The Foreign Secretary made his speech, pulled the cord, and revealed another figure in shapeless wraps. The disappointment that, after so much preparation, he should disclose so little was only equalled by the rapidly spreading conviction that perhaps after all his Middle East policy was no more than a succession of dark draperies.

The Foreign Secretary's speech was, in fact, a protracted mystification. At any moment the House expected Recognition to pop its head around the corner; and more than one paragraph seemed likely to lead to that result. But Mr. Bevin had an invincible repugnance against announcing a decision which all his past policies cried out against. "Just let me say a word for the Arabs," he said. And indicated that, but for Arab help, the war in the Western Desert would never have been won. The Jews, in his view, were the aggressors; but he hoped the peace-talks at Rhodes would succeed provided that all the Arab States acquiesced, and that the decisions accorded with his policy.

The ragged cheers during his speech showed both the division in the House on the Palestine question, and the emotions with which it has now become laden. The Young Tories, led by the Brigadiers, liked Bevin's policy to the extent that it was anti-Zionist; but disliked it for being incompetently anti-Zionist. Not all of them felt able to follow their leader into the lobby, and many of those who did so looked wistfully back at the sprinkling of anti-Zionist abstentionists who stayed in their places when the vote was taken.

The course of the debate showed clearly that the Tories are tiring of the Foreign Secretary, not through lack of sympathy with his general principles but because of their dissatisfaction with his personal qualifications for his job. From Churchill, who spoke scornfully of his "victory of patience and phlegm," to Pickthorn, who loses no occasion to attribute to him the vice of unintelligibility, the Tories made it plain that they only regard him as a *pis aller*. A spectre haunts the Tory clubs when the Foreign Office is mentioned. It's name is Dalton.

But although Churchill shares his party's fear of what might follow Bevin, he didn't want to leave unsaid what it might be useful to record against the time when the Tories will want a change of Foreign Secretary. And so the Foreign Secretary sat in his familiar attitude of a defiant man in a blizzard while Churchill taunted him with having mishandled the Palestine problem and achieved a fiasco. In one sense Churchill had the advantage of the Foreign Secretary; he had had over twenty-five years of active experience in dealing with Palestine; the Foreign Secretary had only three and a half years practical experience and a lifetime of prejudices.

The general debate began badly with a strangely uninformed and hesitant speech by Harrison. He was satisfied with the Government's Palestine policy, though he wasn't sure why; but he was quite sure that the critics were biassed and malevolent. Norman Smith, a Social Creditor who believes in the alliance of the Kremlin, Wall Street and Zionism, gave a touch of frenzy to a debate in other respects well equilibrated. But the most effective back-bench speech came from Crossman. Not even those who disagreed with him or who for obscure motives resented his speech could refrain from listening to his authoritative arguments with attention. Much abused for his criticisms of foreign affairs, Crossman remains, nevertheless, the back-bencher whose analysis, though unacknowledged, has most sensibly modified the Government's policy since 1945.

The debate ended rather more happily than it began. The Government and all its supporters—abstainers included—were happy that it had not been defeated. The critics were happy that the Prime Minister had pointed to a more hopeful prospect of friendship between Britain, Israel and the Arab States. And the Foreign Secretary, had the happy look of the undefeated champ who has won on points after going down for a count of nine.

Maurice Edelman.

THE FAULT, DEAR BEVIN . . .

It is one of the paradoxes of our time that just at the moment when, in the United States of America, isolationism has been purged from the body politic, Britain should have been attacked by a variant of the same disease. The causes of the infection in the two cases are, of course, different. American isolationism was, in part, a repudiation of European imperialism and power politics by emigrants who had little reason to be grateful to the countries of their birth; in part, the natural indifference to world affairs of a young people busy with the adventure of Western pioneering; and, partly again, the expression of the self-sufficiency of an expanding capitalist system with an almost unlimited home market. Our new British isolationism has very different origins. It is an expression not of growth but of decline, the insularity of a nation used to domination which now resents the fact that power has passed to others. We are inclined to make grimaces at the world outside simply because we can no longer fashion it in our own image.

Of this new British isolationism the Foreign Secretary is the most conspicuous example. Ernest Bevin has always been sensitive to the popular mood; and his foreign policy, whatever its effects abroad, has usually been a genuine reflection of public feeling. He personifies to-day that sense of disgruntlement which we all share. Poor old Britain, we feel, is being roughly treated. Her services to the world have been neither appreciated nor rewarded; and a bunch of awkward foreigners is always lying in wait to pounce on her and steal the last coins in her purse. Even the wealthy friend across the Atlantic who, very properly, is giving her some assistance, is not himself above suspicion.

A foreign policy based on suspicion and resentment is bound, in a period of declining power, to be popular with the unthinking elector. For a time, in fact, the more spectacular its failure the greater its popularity, since each failure can be explained away as yet another stab in the back. Now it is the Jews who are diddling us; now the Wogs; now the wicked Russians; now the rich Americans; and now the immoral French across the Channel, whose literature, as Mr. Bevin recently reminded us, causes the bluff Britisher to leer. For nearly four years Mr. Bevin has won the plaudits of the nation, and in particular the Conservative Party, by going round from one conference to another with a placard hanging from his neck inscribed with the words "Unfair to Ernie."

At long last it is being realised that this defensive insularity is jeopardising our chances of recovery. The recent disasters in the Middle East were due, not to a Jewish conspiracy with Wall Street and the Kremlin, but to the incompetence and blind prejudice of Mr. Bevin and his advisers. The abject failure of our policy in Greece and in Germany was not due, as official quarters suggest, only to the Russians or the Americans, but to the inability of Downing Street to have a Greek or a German policy. Finally, the almost universal belief outside our shores that it is British insularity that is the chief obstacle to Western Union is not a malignant fiction of foreign Anglophobes. "The fault, dear Bevin . . ."

This fault is one which we might have expected in a Conservative but hardly in a Socialist, to whom the end of British imperialism should not come as an unmitigated disaster. Only in India and Burma has our policy been based, not on a crusty reluctance to let anything slip from our grasp, but on a belief that a new and equal relationship was possible between Britain and the Asiatic peoples. Instead of shouting "What we have we hold," Mr. Attlee said to the Indians and Burmese, "What we can and should no longer hold we give you freely."

How very different our position would be if Mr. Bevin had applied such principles in the rest of our foreign policy. True enough, it would not have been easy. Ever since 1945 there have been plenty of realistic arguments for clinging to antiquated concepts and defending untenable positions in the belief that we cannot afford to surrender anything. Moreover, up to last November there was always the excuse that Mr. Dewey's election would inaugurate an era of reactionary American policy to which Britain perforce would have to accommodate herself. With the U.S.A. supporting Franco, De Gaulle, Chang Kai-shek and the Arab League, and converting the Marshall Plan into a pure rearmament programme, what chance was there for Britain to pursue constructive aims abroad?

This argument has been removed by the reelection of Mr. Truman. Week by week the President is making it clearer that he indeed regards himself as the heir to Roosevelt, and his Fair Deal for the World the direct descendant of the New Deal which Roosevelt gave the U.S.A. In the case of Palestine, recent events have dramatically illustrated what Truman's victory means. Mr. Dewey might well have connived at British military reprisals against the Jews. Mr. Truman bluntly told Mr. Bevin to stop fooling about and recognise Israel.

Moreover, the doctrine which the Foreign Secretary himself enunciated in 1945, that our aim would be to raise the standard of living of the millions of Arab *fellahin*, has now become American policy. But with the difference that, whereas Britain had not the capital for the job, America has plenty. The tiny State of Israel is likely to receive in the next two years more capital investment than the whole sum devoted to our Colonial Development scheme; and, if Britain is co-operative, the Arab peoples, under schemes like the Jordan Valley Authority, will be able to share the benefit. If Mr. Truman means what he says—and there seems no reason to doubt it—the Middle East in the next ten years may undergo the development which has carried the industrial revolution to the frontier wastes of America.

In his speech last Tuesday to the Foreign Press Association Mr. Bevin rightly welcomed the philosophy of the Fair Deal. But it is difficult to avoid the impression that the defeat of Dewey has considerably embarrassed him. He not only re-insured against Dewey's election; in certain important respects he was counting on it. In the Middle East, as we have seen, it was of vital importance for the success of his plans. In the Far East also he probably expected a Republican regime in Washington would be more sympathetic to the efforts of the Dutch and French Governments to crush the independence movements in Indonesia and Viet-Nam. Finally, on the central issue of Russia, Mr. Bevin certainly feels that Mr. Dewey's anti-Communism would have been much more reliably intransigent than Mr. Truman's. With Truman at the White House, there is always a danger of peace breaking out.

No wonder it has taken the Foreign Office some time to adjust itself to the shock of the Presidential election. In the past, Mr. Bevin has not troubled to conceal his contemptuous dislike of Mr. Truman, and the emotion is fully reciprocated. Indeed, the White House probably regards as reactionary most of the policies with which the Labour Government is associated; and it is not impossible that within a very short time we shall see the paradoxical spectacle of a progressive American foreign policy carried out with the grudging consent, if not with the active opposition, of the Foreign Secretary of Socialist Britain.

Can such a humiliating situation be avoided? In the Palestine debate Mr. Bevin stuck stubbornly to his spiked guns. Events—and the Dominions—will ultimately force him to yield ground to his critics and recognise Israel. But what is needed is a change of heart—and a change of advisers—in the Foreign Secretary and the Prime Minister, a decision to put behind them the testy and often discourteous insularity which has increasingly coloured their conduct of foreign policy, and to go all out for genuine co-operation between Western Europe, the Commonwealth and the U.S.A. in establishing that Fair Deal for the backward peoples which is the only alternative to Communism and the only basis for a lasting peace with the U.S.S.R.

OF MICE, MEN AND MINERS

LIKE that indefatigable hatcher of plans, Lord James Stuart, the National Coal Board is proposing to bring about, by its projected rationalisation schemes, big changes in the economic and social structure of Scotland. But though he has had to meet gusty criticism from a group of Scottish M.P.s, Lord Balfour, vigorous and persuasive chairman of the N.C.B.'s Scottish Division, need have no fear of being "headed," as Murray was, for ill-fated intrusion into great affairs. He can fairly plead, not merely that his Divisional plans are essential for Scotland's well-being, but that the role of architect of change is being thrust on him by Nature herself. After close on a century of uncontrolled and greedy exploitation, in which productive upper seams were worked to exhaustion without regard to sound principles of development, and great tracts were flooded for lack of co-ordinated pumping, the outraged earth below Lanarkshire has rebelled against the collier. In 1910 the Central coalfield (which takes in also Stirling, Dumbartonshire and part of West Lothian) was producing 24 million tons a year, out of a Scottish total of 40 million tons. By 1930 its output had fallen to 15 million tons, and to-day its share of the Scottish total (23 millions) is not much more than 8 million tons, produced by 84 collieries.

This, of course, is not a tonnage with which the N.C.B., or the nation, can immediately dispense; the process of concentrating on other, more productive, areas must obviously be gradual. Even in Lanarkshire there are still seams worth working and even developing: near Carluke, for instance, a new shaft is to-day being sunk to tap three seams 2-3 feet thick, with an estimated life of 25 years. But, by-and-large, the Central coalfield has "had it." The remaining workings are mostly a bare 18-24 inches thick (against the 6-7 feet seams common in Fife); "roads" are long and uneconomic in haulage; water is an insistent and costly problem; and, with output per man-shift often under 20 cwt., as compared with 25 cwt. in Fife and 23 cwt. in Mid and East Lothian, the coalfield's financial loss is substantial. In 1947, nineteen of the Central area's worst pits—in which 6,000 men produced 6 per cent. of the total output of Scotland's 80,000 colliers—made an average loss of no less than 9s. per ton. This is a heavy price to pay for augmenting the nation's coal supplies by less than 1½ million tons a year; and—much more important than the worries of the Board's accountants—it represents a sheer waste of human effort when the same number of men, re-deployed in Fife, East Lothian and Ayrshire, could produce much more coal, less arduously.

It is apt to be said in Lanarkshire that the N.G.B. is defeatist and acting arbitrarily; that the coalfield could be reprieved by de-watering and the sinking of numerous shafts to reach seams much deeper than those already worked. This special pleading, for which no support can be found in the 1944 Report of the Scottish Coalfields Committee, is based, not on reason, but instinctive local patriotism. Out of Scotland's proved reserves of 8,000 million tons of coal, only 12 per cent. lie in the Central coalfield; and, in a recent visit to Lanarkshire, I found universal agreement among the N.C.B.'s local technicians that, as an alternative to active development of Scotland's other fields, prolonging the life of Lanarkshire pits—by costly and questionably effective de-watering, and by deeper workings which would only reach coal of indifferent quality—would be hopelessly uneconomic. In short, there is nothing for it but the N.C.B.'s plan, which is to concentrate on Fife, East Lothian and Ayrshire development, and in Lanarkshire to close ten pits between now and June, followed by 20-30 more closures in the next eighteen months. The net result should be an increase of 20,000 tons daily in Scotland's coal output.

Now, in terms of coal supply and movement alone, this plan raises problems which call for co-ordinated work by various planning authorities. For instance, the bulk of Scotland's heavy industry will remain in the Clyde Valley; and, as fuel for the steel works, traditionally fed by Lanarkshire, comes to be drawn increasingly from Fife and the Lothians, a big reorganisation of rail traffic (complicated by the Forth Bridge bottleneck) will be required. The Transport Commission will also have to adjust port facilities at Leith, Methil and Ayr to deal with altered sources of Scotland's hoped-for export surplus. But it is in terms of the human factor—the 5,000 colliers who will be displaced in the Central coalfield between now and the end of 1950, and the continuing displacements over the next decade—that Scotland's coal rationalisation becomes a fascinating "news story."

Worked-out pits have been shut down before this—in days when nobody cared much what became of the miners. As a schoolboy in the Lothians, forty years ago, I recall meeting a glum group of colliers, migrants from a closed pit in the Clyde Valley. "Did you not want to move East?" I asked. "No fear; 'twas oor bellies flitted, not oor hearts," was the answer. What is novel, and humane, in the Coal Board's present scheme is that it represents an effort to substitute suasion and rational incentives (framed in close consultation with the miners' Union) for the compulsion of the "clemmed" belly. By which I do not mean to imply that Lord Balfour and his colleagues are purely starry-eyed humanitarians: they have a hard-boiled utilitarian interest in avoiding the loss to the Division of much-needed man-power which would happen if, as in the days of private enterprise, nothing was done to stop men drifting away from haphazardly closed pits into other occupations. But in a nationalised industry welfare considerations are not less genuine because they also "pay"; and most of the Scots miners to whom I talked were ready to praise the Board for what they called a "verry decent piece of Socialist planning—for all that Balfour's an Earl, foreby."

Briefly, the scheme for planned transfers works like this. There is a general call for volunteers from the Central coalfield to migrate to one or other of the three "expanding" areas—a call addressed primarily, but *not* exclusively, to the doomed pits. As vacancies occur at the reception end, volunteers (unless debarred for flagrant absenteeism) are notified where they are to go, provided with a free rail-warrant for themselves and their dependants, and told where to seek temporary accommodation. This means, in the first instance, a hostel. There, bachelors are given a settling-in grant of 24s. 6d., while married men draw a lodging allowance of 4s. a day—roughly the amount of the hostel bill—until a house, where their family can join them, is found. (For this, I learned in Fife, the average waiting period is about three weeks.) Suppose that in any particular condemned pit only half the miners volunteer for transfer, work-places (it is planned) will be found locally for the remainder in the room of voluntary transferees from Central pits not on the 1949-50 closure list.

On paper, an admirable scheme; and it is already operating, quietly and smoothly, before any of this year's scheduled closures have taken effect. To Lanarkshire's young married couples—many of whom have been struggling to rear small children in a "but and ben" or even a "one-room let" in a miners' row, the promise of a new house in a reception area makes a strong appeal. I recall the pride with which Mrs. S., whose three toddlers had been born in a single apartment in Holytown's grisly Baird Square, showed me round her three-roomed house in Kennoway, where a hilltop housing estate looks over Leven to the sea. But in the best of social blue-prints there are snags—technical and human. Within the N.C.B.'s own province there is the difficulty of marrying vacancies to skills: how accommodate, for instance, in a pit whose need is for face-workers, an intake of volunteers whose experience has been that of on-cost workers on haulage? Again, transfers must keep pace with housing construction. Local authority building schemes in the reception areas are being given priority by St. Andrew's House in allocations of materials; and the Scottish Special Housing Association has 3,500 houses under construction specifically for miners. Allotted on a 50-50 basis between transferees and under-housed "locals," 1,800 of these houses should be finished within six months; but, even so, synchronisation between the closing of pits and completion of houses may be tricky.

The biggest factor, however, in the equation is psychological: the human animal is strongly, strangely attached to his environment. At a soon-to-be-closed pit near Carluke, where men lie in deep puddles to strip, when undercut, a 20-inch seam, I asked a grey-haired miner if he would not welcome a shift to a more modern mine elsewhere. Sadly he shook his head. "It will be a sair day when she shuts down," he said; "she's an auld hoor, but oor ain." Again, at one of the doomed Thankerton pits, as the back-shift was being wound up by what is surely the most medieval cage and head-gear in Britain, I waylaid a middle-aged collier to ask his views on "flitting" to Fife. Spitting dourly on the blackened soil, he flung at me over his shoulder: "F—— Fife"—an expletive commination on the schemes of all planners. It may be rash to generalise: though Fife, to Lanarkshire folk, is a "foreign" country with a reputation (ill-deserved in my experience) for clannishness, Ayrshire is more "sib," and from the Lothians it is easy to pay visits by bus to home towns. Maybe the transfer of 60-70 per cent. of the "displaced" in Lanarkshire can, in time, be organised; but the N.C.B. will have to overcome great reluctance among the older men to move. Illogically—in face, at least, of present needs—wages in Fife tend to be lower than those in the "losing" parts of the Central coalfield, though maximum piecework earnings on tonnage may be greater. Then, too, in (rightly, I think) giving notice of the broad lines of its concentration programme, the N.C.B. has incurred the risk of mobilised opposition (already vocal) from Lanarkshire patriots — M.P.s, local authorities and shopkeepers—who are inclined to talk, exaggeratedly, of "condemning a county to death."

This is arrant nonsense. It may be that, over the next ten years, Lanarkshire will lose 30,000 of its population through the migration of its miners — particularly those in the 20-35 age-group—and some of those in ancillary services. One cannot deny that this raises problems—for the N.C.B., whose labour-force will tend progressively to have a higher average age; for local authorities, whose housing and school programmes may require modification. But apart from the consideration that thousands of new dwellings are needed in Lanarkshire before even a much-diminished population would be adequately housed, there is plenty of life left yet in Lanarkshire's economy—not merely its traditional steel and heavy engineering, but nascent light industries in its trading estates, established and projected. Indeed, the growth of these new industries—providing, as they do, employment for the adult children of the older, skilled face-workers whose services the coal industry can least afford to lose—presents the N.C.B. with perhaps its toughest problem. Why flit, and break painfully old ties, friendships and associations, if grown-up bairns can bring enough money into the house—over and above "redundancy" compensation?

"What Fife needs, if this transfer scheme is to be a success," an Area official of the N.C.B. said to me, "is for both Leven and Methil to have a team in Division A of the League." He knew his miners; but I would add that what Fife needs even more is the establishment of diversified light industries to supplement the lino. of Kirkcaldy and Haig's distilleries on the Leven as work-places for non-mining adults in miners' families. It was disconcerting to be told by Scottish planners in Edinburgh that this was ruled out because "Fife is not a distressed area." Agreed; but how else secure the balanced population which is the planners' target? How else attract miners with grown-up sons and daughters? The best hope is that the Development Corporation of the projected new 6,000-acre town of Glenrothes, on the Leven, will come to the rescue. The town's primary function is to include among its 30,000 future inhabitants an influx of 6,000 additional miners to be absorbed, by 1956, in the great new Rothes pit, whose sinking has begun, and in other nearby, expanding collieries. But there should be scope in the town, not merely for a communal life which the Leven-Kirkcaldy housing estates lack, but for factories to employ miners' adult dependants. That is vital; and it is equally important that, in the New Towns schedule, Glenrothes should have a high priority. If I were Mr. Gaitskell and wanted, as he surely does, to give more power to the N.C.B.'s elbow, I should be "on to" Mr. Secretary Woodburn about Glenrothes, in and out of season.

Aylmer Vallance

AN IRISH DIARY

Sir Basil Brooke's decision to hold a quick election in the Six Counties was announced the morning after I reached Belfast from Dublin. Driving out to keep my appointment with him at Stormont, I asked myself as I passed the melodramatic statue of Carson shaking his fist at the world in general and at Southern Ireland in particular, how much of the old bullying spirit of Ulster I should find surviving in its present Premier. The answer is that on the surface no one could be more courteous or reasonable than Sir Basil; the old spirit survives only in the sense that the Southern Irish are still in his mind a charming but feckless lot of people, much given to Catholicism, and under no circumstances to be trusted. Sir Basil pronounced himself well satisfied with his second visit to Mr. Attlee. In view of Sir Basil's published demand, this can only mean that the British Prime Minister has promised to give statutory form to his verbal pledge not to allow the status of the Six Counties to be changed without their free consent. No one can be surprised that such a favourable moment has been seized upon by the Six County Government for a quick election. The proclamation of a Republic in the South, supported by one or two unwise speeches by Irish politicians, can be blown up into a threat to the existence of the Six Counties. The election will show a large Protestant majority solidly against any attempt, however reasonable the approach, to weaken Ulster's will to remain part of the United Kingdom and loyal to the British Crown.

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Maybe it is easier than it used to be to heed the old warning not to talk in Ireland about politics or religion. Certainly the shepherd who stopped us and began, uninvited, to describe the contrariness of sheep in general and the superb qualities of his own dog in particular would have gone on until dark without reviling the British, recalling the troubles or making more than a passing reference to the villainy of the Protestants over the border. The sun was painting splendid colours on the mountains of Mourne and the road would have taken us very soon into the Six Counties themselves. "What about partition?" "Sure," he said, "it is a thing that ought to be done away with," but he said it without passion. And so I found amongst most people in the South. It is now only among a dwindling number of elder politicians that the civil war and the Treaty are constant memories of real bitterness. The younger generation bear more lightly the grudges of their fathers. In Irish even more than in other politics I find myself muttering: "While there is death there is hope."

* * *

The will to get rid of Mr. De Valera's party (after 16 years of office) is the real basis of unity in the present Government. The leaders of the three parties which have come together had the sense not to make a "coalition." They call it Inter-Party Government and they have agreed on a 10-point programme which includes a system of national insurance and a considerable amount of social reform. The Clann, Mr. MacBride's new party, made rash promises; it even said it would stop emigration, and reduce prices by 30 per cent. The first is beyond State control; on the second the Government can claim to have pegged prices (at best) while increasing wages. The three parties were meeting for two whole-day discussions when I was in Dublin. I gathered that there was no risk, as the Opposition Press suggested, of an early break in the unity of the Government, but that difficulties may arise when the Chancellor of the Exchequer, heavily supported by some of the business interests that have always been behind the Cosgrave Party, begins to kick at heavy expenditure on the social services. To-day, however, all goes fairly smoothly. The decision to make Ireland a Republic and the renewed talk of ending partition are agreeable to everyone.

* * *

"Why," I ask, "did Mr. Costello, the Prime Minister, having promised during the campaign not to change the Constitution, after the election decide to snap the last few strings that kept Ireland tied to the Commonwealth?" One explanation is that, in the election campaign, Mr. Costello only promised that if his party (which, after all, under Cosgrave stood for the British connection) won the majority, they would make no Constitutional change, but that if the result of the election was a reunion of the parties, then all of them must compromise. In brief, Costello has made Ireland a Republic in order to satisfy Mr. MacBride, his Foreign Secretary. I doubt this. I believe that Mr. Costello, like most other Irishmen, greatly enjoyed proclaiming the Republic. Nor do I take much account of the argument that finally pushing the King out of the Twenty-Six Counties would "take the gun out of Irish politics." It is true that the new Government has been able to release half a dozen I.R.A. gunmen who were still in jail, and that there is no fear to-day of I.R.A. violence; but the real reason, in my view, is that Fine Gael (Costello's Party) is tired of being taunted with being pro-British. De Valera is deprived of his most-used weapon. By becoming out-and-out Republicans Costello and his colleagues have stolen De Valera's thunder and hope to achieve an abiding popularity.

* * *

Sean MacBride is certainly the most remarkable figure to appear in Irish politics for many years. His father was shot by the British after the 1916 rising. His mother is the famous Irish beauty and patriot, Maud Gonne. He himself was leader of the I.R.A., and it was certainly not until 1937 that he was prepared to accept the Constitution. Meeting him, no one would guess any such background. He is restrained, moderate, charming and persuasive. He looks the perfect diplomat. He talks French as the French. He is a very elegant, as well as a very able, man. Almost everyone speaks of him with respect, but also with some reserve. The Right, especially in Ulster, wonder whether the Foreign Secretary, making so notable a name for himself, has ceased to be a revolutionary. The Left, who once saw MacBride as the link between the I.R.A. and revolutionary Socialism, now fear that he may be a personal success rather than a revolutionary leader. Obviously, much depends on the future of his party. Some prophesy that it will gradually merge into the Labour Party. The position, indeed, is much as if the Commonwealth Party here, representing, like the Clann, a revolt from the older parties during the war, had done so well in the General Election of 1945 that it received several seats in a post-war coalition—only to find that there was little in its outlook to distinguish it from the Labour Party.

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"There seem to me three basic obstacles to ending partition," I said to one Southern Irish statesman, "two obstacles, that is, apart from the new factor of Irish neutrality in the last war, and its effect in tying Ulster and the U.K. more tightly together." After we had discussed this factor (which must be the subject of another article) my Irish friend said: "And which are the two other obstacles? I can only see one—the obstinate, greedy domination of the Six Counties by a small clique of rich men who gained their power by force and fraud and maintain it by discrimination against Catholics and jerrymandering constituencies." "I agree," I said, "that this is one of the two obstacles. The story of how Northern Ireland became Protestant is a justification for any degree of Irish bitterness, and discrimination does, I know, exist. "Special powers" used against the I.R.A. and the Left may be revived again. Jerrymandering in local elections is, I agree, serious, even if it is not important enough substantially to alter results in Parliamentary seats. But I cannot agree that that is the whole story. The second obstacle still exists. Is it not true that in the last resort the clique in Northern Ireland maintain their power because nearly all the 60 per cent. of Protestants in the North prefer to vote even for their narrow type of Conservatism rather than to run the risk of being a minority in a Catholic country?" At that my friend could stand no more. "Blathers," he said, "you've got all your old Protestant prejudices, just as I've my anti-British prejudices. Have we not confounded every prophet by our tolerance since 1922?"

* * *

Now this is perfectly true. But how can I explain to a Catholic why a Protestant, who lives in Ireland, may kick against the tolerance of the Catholic Episcopate? Would he understand if I made him listen to the story of a Protestant who set out to start a café in a small town in the West of Ireland and could not get the shop repaired or the suppliers to send the food because of the hints dropped by the priest? Does he know that, apart from the not very effective official censorship, there is an unofficial censorship by the printer who fears to offend the priest and lose his regular printing of popular pieties? (What these pieties mean you can perhaps judge if I quote, not from a parish magazine, but from the most popular weekly, the *Standard*.) Before me is a column devoted to a solemn justification of the morality of God in having deceived the devil into thinking that Christ was not wholly God since otherwise he would not have tried his hand at tempting Jesus! No, I agree that a Protestant can live unmolested and enjoy a very agreeable life in Southern Ireland; but, he must accept a standard of ignorance which he will only find tolerable if his sense of humour is stronger than his conscience. Equally important, perhaps, is the fact that divorce and remarriage are impossible in the Twenty-Six Counties, while all Protestants who take the responsibilities of parentage seriously have a real greivance in the total ban on all contraceptives.

* * *

The censorship complaint is irritating, but funny. You produce a work of fiction, earnest in intention as all Irish books are, and you include in it striking or even rather shocking phrases. It circulates and is favourably reviewed in the better-class papers. Then an old lady in Limerick complains to the Censorship Board that the book is indecent. Each member of the Board receives a copy in which the allegedly obscene passages are carefully underlined. After a due lapse of time they pronounce the book as liable to undermine Irish morals; it is then banned. After another lapse of time, in which much indignation is expressed and much useful publicity obtained with no expense, there is an appeal and the book is unbanned. Those who care about good writing and those who wish to read indecent phrases both rush to buy your now famous book. Take the case of Patrick Kavanagh whose *Tarry Flynn* was recently banned and then unbanned. Kavanagh himself is a well-known figure in the literary saloons of Dublin. He plays the part conscientiously. At first his conversation consists mainly of abuse, in more or less perverse language, of other people — especially writers. If you tell him he is playing the part of a stage Irishman he freely admits it and then goes on to say much that is original and interesting about Ireland and the Irish stage. He is a natural poet, the poet of the plough. I read his recent novel, which describes how a mute, inglorious Milton in a remote Irish village desired to kiss a maiden as well as to write poetry, but could never summon up courage to do so. I can imagine no reason for banning *Tarry Flynn* unless it is that Kavanagh frequently includes such phrases as: "I would not have him if his bottom was paved with diamonds"—a remark which, I presume, might be criticised by an old lady in Limerick. The book of course is now selling well in Dublin.

* * *

Accustomed to queues nowadays, I found no great hardship on the non-stop express from Dublin to Belfast in having to stand a quarter of an hour in a corridor to have my luggage examined. If I were an Irishman I should be furious at having my luggage searched by British officials inside my own country. It all depends on the point of view. The Customs official obviously harboured the supposition that all of us coming up from Dublin were smugglers and worse. The Irish boy in front of me denied bringing any articles of contraband. The official poked industriously in the suitcase, finally bringing out a Wellington boot. Having extracted various layers of paper, he brought out a pound of butter. "Phew," he said, "that will taste good," put it back into the Wellington boot and dismissed that particular act of smuggling as not worth bothering about. Then came my turn. Had I bought anything in Southern Ireland, made any purchases of whisky, cigarettes? I replied yes, I had bought several articles of wear, a pair of shoes, two shirts and pyjamas. How much did they cost? I tried to remember. "Well," he said, putting the shoes back in the manner of the headmaster restoring the cane or the magistrate passing the prisoner over for probation, "we will say nothing about it." "But," I said, "on the contrary, I did not know I was not allowed to buy things in Dublin." "Oh," he said, "you are allowed to buy them if you pay the tax on them." "Well, how much do I owe you?" By that time all the venom had gone out of the man and he passed me through—irritated, but unmulcted.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Finchley Council workmen are nothing if not modest. They were somewhat perturbed when ordered to give a bath to "La Délivrance," a naked bronze woman, 8ft. tall, which stands on a pedestal in Regent's Park Road.

Because they thought it would be embarrassing for them to scrub down the figure in public view a canvas screen was put round them while they worked.—*News Chronicle.* (R. J. G. Dutton.)

Players of Tudor Rose, junior team of Chelsea F.C., are to have lectures on sex education next month as part of their grooming as potential professional footballers.—*Star.* (Mrs. E. A. Seligman.)

The Francis Bacon Society have suffered the indignity of people mistaking their office for the premises of the Bacon Marketing Board. So the word "Francis" is to appear in front of the "Bacon" on the notice board.—*Reynolds News.* (E. G. Breeze.)

Because he "did not want to be too hard on members of the Territorial Association, who are some of the few who realise the position of this country," Sheriff More of Kirkcaldy yesterday deferred sentence for six months on a Kircaldy miner found guilty of embezzling £26 6s. 4d.—*Scottish Daily Mail.* (W. Pollock.)

This is a good teaching film. . . . No high or low church bias . . . that is left for the teacher to put in.—*Dawn Trust Films, 1949 Catalogue.* (Theodore Shepherd.)

CHINA RED

(*A poem of the late Soong Dynasty*).

Communist troops are ordered, on big posters in Pekin, to observe seven rules of good conduct and "not to tease the girls,"—News item.

Mao Tse-tung,
The Lenin of the Great Republic of China,
Forges the Dictatorship of the Pu-lo-ta-li-ya.
Communist armies cross the Hwang-ho,
They stand on the north bank of the Yangtze.
Kuomintang conscripts vanish like mist on the rice-fields.
Chiang Kai-shek directs the defence by radio telephone,
But the Pekin garrison retires.

By the south gate of Pekin
General Fu has politely departed,
As General Lin enters the northern suburbs.
But the Communist army
Liberating Pekin
Will be courteous in speech,
Kind to prisoners of war.
Nobody will be scolded or beaten
And they will not tease the girls.

In Nanking,
Not to be outdone in civility,
General Li releases prisoners, frees the press,
Recalls exiled democrats as honoured guests,
Offers conciliation
And suspends trials for un-Chinese activities.
But the Kuomintang are on the war-crimes list,
And Red soldiers in Pekin
Pay for what they buy in full,
Return borrowed goods,
Protect private property,
And do not tease the girls.

Dr. Sun,
From Chungking Pacification Headquarters
Sends envoys to pave the path of compromise,
Whereby the Three Principles of respected Sun Yat Sen
Could merge with the Two Steps of Mao's New San Min Shu I,
While dispersal trains stand by for public personnel,
And the Communists in Pekin
Arrest no peaceful citizen,
Destroy no crops,
Give compensation for damage,
And do not tease the girls.

The Great Republic of China
Kowtows to a One-headed supremacy
Intolerant of polite insubordination.
The Kuomintang has only the setting Sun,
Mao Tse-tung has Tientsin, Peng-pu and Pekin.
The Yangtze defences are weak,
But the Reds in Pekin,
Fighting for the Dictatorship of the Pu-lo-ta-li-ya,
Take nothing from the people,
Not even a needle or thread,
And do not tease the girls.

SAGITTARIUS.

BRITISH PLANNING—AS FRANCE SEES IT

MOST Frenchmen view the British Four-Year Plan with admiration and resentment. They admire the civic discipline of a people who practise austerity, and, as they think, like it. They resent the self-sufficiency of the British Plan, which, in their view, takes no account of the problems of British neighbours. Curiously, everyone is surprised that the British and French Plans, produced in isolation, don't fit. Recognising that Britain will continue to be a "necessity" market, the French have planned to increase their output of wheat, dairy produce and meat; but only in the same way as an enterprising business-man may lay in a stock of what he considers a good selling line. Until the recent meeting of the Anglo-French Economic Committee, the British and French planners have been busily filling in their papers under the eye of the American invigilator, each of them careful not to crib. This detachment expresses itself in incongruities.

The French propose to increase their agricultural output by 25 per cent. in the next four years. With the help of more tractors and more fertilisers, they are to be substantial exporters both of wheat and meat by 1952. That is the hypothesis. But they are worried about the reality, about their own ability to produce and about Britain's willingness to buy. Can France, they ask, with extra mechanisation, raise her production by 25 per cent.? As long as the price of wheat is relatively cheaper than that of meat, will not the peasant prefer to raise livestock on grain rather than deliver it all for collection? And if the Government gets tough with the peasants, who now pay only 7 per cent. of the taxes although they have 20 per cent. of the national income, will they not "go slow" on output? Yet these self-doubts are less insistent than fears that Britain would rather encourage the development of wheat in Australia's Northern Territory than in France, and would not be a customer for France's surplus if the Commonwealth were a seller. As for meat, there are rumours, ill-founded no doubt, circulating in Paris that British meat importers have protested against the likelihood of an increase in French meat imports, on the grounds that foot-and-mouth disease is prevalent in France. They would be prepared to take a certain amount of French meat—tinned. The French breeders say unsmilingly that they haven't noticed any indisposition on the part of British visitors to eat steaks in Paris.

With the object of producing 100,000,000 tons of wheat in 1952, the French have been buying large numbers of tractors from the U.S.A., and intend to make 50,000 in their own factories during 1952. Since the British Plan provides for a 10 per cent. increase over the 100,000 tractors now being manufactured annually here, British manufacturers may feel some anxiety about the French market. Is it advantageous to European co-operation that France should spend dollars on tractors, and that she should exert herself to build a tractor industry, when Britain has a large, industry, ready and willing to sell to France? When this argument is advanced to the French, they reply: "We see the logic of your case, and it would be valid provided that, in suppressing, say, our tractor industry, you in turn damped down one of your industries which compete with us under the Four Year Plans. You intend to export about £400,000,000 of industrial equipment and to import only about £25,000,000, of which a substantial part will come from Germany. Are you prepared to help us by taking our industrial exports? We don't want to become Britain's new Argentine. The Nazis wanted us to have a comparable position, but we declined."

In fact, France proposes, under her Four-Year Plan, to raise her industrial output by 40 per cent., with a view to reducing imports and increasing exports. It isn't hard to foresee a brutal and mutually harmful collision between French and British industrial exporters if they meet, as seems inevitable, in the same markets. Nor is there a lack of conflict in the field of invisible exports. France is planning a quite immoderate increase in her tourist traffic by 1952. In 1947, tourism brought in 10 million dollars; in the summer of 1948, helped by Uno, the figure rose to 60 million dollars. In 1952-1953, the French hope to earn 330 million dollars. The British plan is to raise tourist revenue from 80 million dollars in 1947, and 140 million dollars in 1948, to 260 million dollars in 1952-53. Can both these targets be attained?

The most dramatic conflict, however, between British and French ideas for the next four years concerns the wine industry. In France to-day, one person in seven is engaged in the production or distribution of wines and spirits. A blend of climate, soil and skill have made French wines the best in the world, a desirable ingredient in a civilised and comfortable life. To reinforce their faith in their industry, the Bordeaux shippers have recently hired a British advertising agency, and instructed it to popularise their wines in Britain. There is an obvious clash here between Britain's planned self-denial and French unwillingness to cease producing for export, as well as for domestic consumption, the materials of good living.

These, then, are some examples of the incompatibility of the French and British Plans, and the opposition of the vested interests of both countries. There is nothing pejorative in the use of the term "vested interests." The worker making a tractor at Billancour shares a vested interest with his employer in not wishing his plant to be closed down in favour of the worker and employer in Dagenham. The labourer in the vineyards of South-west France doesn't want to plough up his trees in order to grow potatoes for export. (Nor would the Lincolnshire farmers be happy if he did.) No one in France and Britain, whether worker or employer, would be content that either the blue-print committees of the O.E.E.C. or the Anglo-French Economic Committee or even a Sovereign Authority of a Federal Europe should *instruct* them to do this or that in order that their activities may fit into the General Plan.

Does this mean that the concept of an economically integrated Western Europe is illusory? It does not mean that: but it does mean that the technique of "harmonisation," which has so far been used is unsuitable for its purpose. An economic plan for two or more sovereign States can be made either by the authoritarian method used by Russia in Eastern Europe, or by the collective consent of the industries in the various countries. This second, democratic method requires a consultation between similar industries in the various countries, grouping their productive units into international trade associations, in the same way as similar industries in a single country form national trade associations.

Before the war, this kind of international agreement was known as a cartel, and very properly attracted to itself the odium of organisations which restrict output in order to keep up prices. But that was an abuse by monopoly businessmen of a technique of consultation which, properly used, can bring order and mutual advantages to the participating industries. The post-war cartels should not be organisations of industrialists alone. They should have a triple constitution of industrialists, trade unionists and governments, and should be under the general direction of O.E.E.C. In that way, unlike the old cartels, their function would be constantly related to public policy, as well as to the interests of those who directly benefit from them.

There might be an Anglo-French Motor Organisation in which manufacturers, workers and governments would have agreed on specialisation, standardisation, the division of labour and the allocation of markets. We might see an Anglo-French Agricultural Machinery Organisation which would promote the manufacture of, say, lighter tractors in Britain and heavier tractors in France. We might see an Anglo-French Iron and Steel Organisation, associating itself later with our European neighbours in a European Iron and Steel Authority. We might even have the simultaneous encouragement of the export of French wines to Britain, and the export of British tourists to France. An Anglo-French Economic Plan is possible; but not by the present method of planning. The Four Year Plans in their present form must be rapidly modified by bi-national consultations at the industrial level, if they are not to do ultimate damage, first to France and later to Britain.

MAURICE EDELMAN

AN AFFAIR OF ZULU HONOUR

(*By a Durban Correspondent.*)

When 'Mlangeni brought me my tea and newspaper at six on that Friday morning I felt, for no obvious reason, that something was wrong. I asked him. He would not look me in the eyes and said "*Auck! 'nkosan;* I do not know. I am not good." I opened my newspaper and almost at once I knew. There, on the main page, was a long account of the beginning of the now notorious Durban riots. It was the story of the most immediate importance in the paper, but the editor had played it down at the bottom of the page. In fact his "lead" featured a storm at Mossel Bay, a small port 600 miles south of Durban. The result was unfortunate. There is only one morning newspaper in Durban, and we all started our day with a tendency to underrate the significance of the riots the night before. Moreover, the ostensible cause of the disturbances must have seemed so trivial to any purely rational mind that it was difficult to see why they should continue.

For this is what happened. On the afternoon of Thursday, in the area where the Natives and Indians congregate for their transport home, a young Zulu *umfaan* was rather seriously hurt about the head by an Indian trader in a quarrel over some change. An ambulance was called and the *umfaan* whisked away to hospital. Immediately the cry went up among the thousands of Zulus nearby that the *umfaan* was dead, butchered by an Indian. It was taken up and repeated with every sort of exaggeration and distortion by the thousands who flocked into the area from beer-halls and factories nearby. Such is the speed, if not the accuracy, of the Zulu lip-to-lip telegraph that, within an hour, Zulu women in locations two hours away were telling their white superintendents that an *umfaan's* head had been cut off by an Indian and was on display in the main Indian mosque in Grey Street. Rioting developed at once and spread rapidly; it took the police four hours until, with the help of a thunderstorm, at nine that night they finally dispersed the mob. Damage to property was considerable, but loss of life was small; and at that stage the police authorities had some grounds for believing that all might well be over. But they reckoned without their Zulu.

The Zulu tends to feel about the Indians as the Nazis did about the Jews, as the Indonesians about the Arabs and the Malays about the Chinese. He believes they exploit him mercilessly. He does most of his buying and selling through them, and he is convinced that, in the war and the difficult post-war years, Indians have profiteered and cheated at his expense. He feels too, that the Indians give themselves airs and assume a superiority intolerable in folk of a colour similar to his own. The European, by his code, is entitled to much because he was superior in battle; the Indian is unforgivable because he has won from him, not in fair fight, but merely by outwitting him. In an instant, all this complex mesh of feelings and resentment was transformed by this injury to the *umfaan*—no Native African loves and spoils his young as the Zulu does—into a clear pattern of Zulu honour.

By eight o'clock, when I was ready to leave for my office, I noticed my servants were no longer working. They were standing in a group and listening and replying to invisible groups in the houses and gardens in the neighbourhood. I called them up and told them they were not t go to town until my return. The oldest of them with a look of dismay, spoke up and said: "How can you speak such words to us, *'nkosan,* when our brothers call"? I told them I liked them al too much, was too responsible to their fathers and chief, to want them to get hurt, and therefore they must stay. They returned to work with resentful, sulky disappointment. On my way to town I saw the scene in my own garden repeated on every street corner.

My heart sank. To anyone who knew his Zulu the portents were most gloomy. Near the railway compounds, they were already beginning to sing and chant. "Our brothers call us. To-day we want to kill and to die." The town was in a ferment, native workers calling to workers from lorries, buses and housetops. I telephoned myself to the police and the military at nine o'clock to warn them that, unless something was done to prevent the Zulus from coalescing, there would be serious bloodshed before evening. I suggested that they should photograph the *umfaan* in hospital, publish the picture in the front page of the evening paper, and issue warnings over the wireless in Zulu. They thanked me kindly, but thought I was exaggerating.

By one o'clock the first improvised *impi,* a band of ragged Zulus armed with sticks, appeared chanting and singing tribal songs in the centre of the city. They should never have got there. One police side-car appeared and called on them to disperse. They roared defiance and swept on to the Indian quarter. By five in the afternoon the *impis* were armies, pouring into the heart of Durban by road, street, side-street and alley. Every Zulu in town, without plan or malice aforethought, was spontaneously in it. The European population was rigidly respected. White people everywhere stood looking at the turbulent masses as if they were seeing a rehearsal of a version of Cecil B. de Mille's "Birth of a Nation." Perhaps they were. A few European drunks cheered them on and called out "Kill the whole b— lot." At Kingsmead, where the M.C.C. played their gallant Test, I saw five young policemen open fire on a mob of a thousand prancing, leaping Zulus who were trying to break past. Seven fell, but two got up—one shot through the lungs, the other in the stomach—dragged themselves over to the police, and, with a smile, asked for medicine. There was something oddly understanding in the attitude of these rag-a-muffin rioters to the police; as if they realised their unenviable role and bore them no malice.

By nightfall, fighting was raging in a dozen places; the night sky was lit with fire, and over the roar of the traffic and the burst of rifle and automatic fire, from time to time rose those defiant, exultant tribal chants. Saturday morning was little better. The battle was transferred from the City to its perimeters. It was not over until nightfall, when the police had been trebled, and the army, navy and air force, regular and territorial, had been called out. More than a hundred dead and a thousand injured have been brought in. No one knows how many more dead and wounded lie in the bush around Durban. Yet, if the authorities on Friday had done what they did on Saturday afternoon, not a soul need have died. It is easy to be wise after the event. But they cannot say they were not warned.

For the moment all is quiet. Everyone asks for how long. Everyone assumes it will happen again. It is idle to ignore that, since the new Government came into power, race relations have taken on a new, bitter and dangerous slant. There is frustration and despair in every Coloured heart. On Saturday evening, coming back from one "battle front" to the quiet foreshore, I saw a well-dressed Native suddenly take a run at some empty milk-bottles outside a door, kick them savagely to bits and then walk sombrely and heavily on. I knew then that riot in the streets was over but that riot in the black heart and mind went on. I knew that, unless there is some miraculous change here in our European hearts, we have seen only the end of a bitter beginning.

THE MAN OF BLOOD

JANUARY 30, 1649, is the most startling date in English history, unexpected and inexplicable. Though Kings had been killed often enough before, it had been by rivals; they had been killed as unworthy holders of the sacred office, tainted in blood or in behaviour. Until this date the words of the poet held true:

> There's a divinity doth hedge a King,
> Rough hew him how we may.

Charles I saw perfectly the principle which he was defending: " A subject and a King are clean different." This was his crime; for this he was executed; and Kingship, not merely an individual King, perished on the scaffold at Whitehall. The magical institution, survivor of man's pre-history, could survive a King's death or murder; indeed ceremonial killing was for centuries part of the ritual as much as coronation. What it could not survive was sentence by a superior court—in the name of the law, of the people. Or of what? For at this point the easy explanations and clever phrases break down. The execution of Charles I ought, no doubt, to have been a great act of psychological liberation, long pursued, the culmination of a generation of revolt. In fact, it was a surprise to everyone concerned, not intended a few months before, and bewildering even to the closest participants a few months afterwards; like many great historical events, the result seemingly of casual circumstance.

The death of Charles I, still less the overthrow of monarchy, was not an issue in the great Civil War. The effect of that war was to destroy the King's material power; but this has never been the essential basis of monarchy—the great difference from dictatorship. Indeed Charles, after defeat, was courted by both Parliament and army; his error was to try to escape from this position of manœuvre. The second Civil War, which Charles provoked, like the flight to Varennes in the French Revolution, was the demonstration that a man who has lived in one convention will never sincerely accept another; they are the classical illustrations of the Communist belief that the only thing to do with the old order is to exterminate it. The old order which Charles represented was legal and religious, or perhaps mystical; it was certainly not social or economic. There were no essential social differences between the two sides, and no conflict of economic policy, unless it be that Cromwell and his associates were more old-fashioned in their views. Charles I did not die for " feudalism." He claimed to die for the Church of England, sensing a magic comparable to his own. In their great, undisputed days, Church and King are rivals, enemies; they draw together only when the mystery of both is running down. More simply, he died for remaining himself; and his behaviour—crooked and dishonest by any normal standards—is the only part of the story which makes sense.

The greatest political genius of our century said that the only interesting question in politics is: " Who whom?" And it was, of course, his intention to be " who." This is also the interesting question of January 30. Who played the part of Prometheus and defied the gods? Who cut off the King's head? Years later, in retrospect, the surviving Republicans made out that they had intended to pull the King down from the beginning; but there was little sign of conscious Republicanism in England before the event. Calvinism, in its various forms, provided an aggressive self-confidence; besides, with its insistence on the Old Testament, it revived in Jehovah a father-symbol even mightier than that of monarchy. Charles I would never have become Charles Stuart, the Man of Blood, had it not been for the years of singing blood-thirsty psalms and hewing Agag in pieces before the Lord. Charles was weakened, too, by his association with Henrietta Maria, as Louis XVI was pulled down by Marie Antoinette. Probably a divine ruler loses " virtue " most by linking himself with symbols of the wrong magic, and Henrietta Maria represented, both in religion and personally, the wrong symbols of Mother and Child. One might argue, too, that the English monarchy had been running down ever since it had fallen into the hands of foreigners, first Welsh, then Scottish. There is no greater danger to constitutional liberties than a monarchy of native stock—a danger from which England has been fortunately and almost uninterruptedly free for centuries. Nevertheless, despite all the symptoms of decline, the execution of Charles and the overthrow of monarchy were the work of one man, the most elusive figure in English history. No one can really trouble his head any more about the fate of the King, this lay figure with the deportment and intellectual equipment of a dancing-master; Cromwell alone was titanic and decisive. In the profound words of Boswell's father, " he gart Kings ken that they had a lith in their neck."

Where did Cromwell find the power to exorcise the magic of the Crown? Foreign observers regarded him as a plain adventurer, bent on autocracy; this is the version of men steeped in the Renaissance, who knew that Richelieu was not a devout Catholic and therefore supposed that Cromwell was not a devout Puritan. Englishmen, for a century and more after the event, treated Cromwell as the supreme hypocrite. Then they suddenly spun round and discovered in him an anticipation of Mr. Gladstone (also, however, regarded as a hypocrite by some). The man who carried off the Mace, the only man ever to rule England by military law, became the champion of parliamentary liberties; and earnest Radicals erected his statue outside the House of Commons which he had closed down.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Cromwell was pronounced by Gardiner to be " the greatest, because the most typical, Englishman of all time " —a judgment which, if true, casts a curious light on the English character. To the twentieth-century historian Cromwell has ceased to be Gladstone and become (shall we say?) Mr. Bevin —a man of obstinate character, slow-moving wits and conservative outlook, who finds himself at the head of a revolutionary movement and does his best to turn this movement into a harmless channel. According to this version, the execution of Charles was " a swing to the Left," undertaken in order to prevent the social revolution which otherwise threatened. Nowadays, indeed, the cutting-down of hedges round " enclosures " is regarded as more important than the cutting-off of the King's head; and the attack on tithe overshadows the breaking of saints' images and of stained-glass windows. Winstanley has taken the place of the Royal Martyr as the tragic figure of the epoch. How strange that no one noticed this at the time.

How strange, one might reply, that English people so soon forgot the King's execution, offered the Crown to Cromwell within a few years and restored Charles II without a tremor. But this forgetfulness is a different matter, the key in fact to the story. The execution of Charles I was the great traumatic experience of the English political nation; and it is essential to a trauma that it should be " forgotten "—its meaning perverted, and the blame placed on others. When the men of the Restoration inserted into the Prayer Book the service for January 30 which survived until the middle of the nineteenth century, they made out that they were apologising for the guilt of others. In truth, they were seeking to obliterate their own. Similarly, the outcry which greeted the return of the Republican Ludlow to England after the Glorious Revolution expressed the hysterical revulsion of the English governing-classes from being reminded of their own past. Even a century later, the sactimonious rebukes to revolutionary France revealed an anxiety to avoid the reminder of historical parallels; and the twenty years of war against the French Republic and Napoleon were, no doubt, a way of purging the earlier guilt. Thereafter English hypocrisy (learnt perhaps from Cromwell?) became natural. Cromwell and Charles I were reconciled, both accepted into the canon of admirable men; and the English, having founded their constitution on the destruction of divine monarchy, could appear to themselves and to others as the most " loyal " of nations.

One element in English society did not forget the event of 1649—the guards round the scaffold in Whitehall, the men for whom Charles I was truly the Man of Blood. This was the defeated party of 1660, compelled, at best, to find an outlet for its iconoclastic vigour in persecuting Irish Papists or exterminating Red Indians. Nevertheless, this element survived, subjected and obscure; and it kept alive an alternative tradition to the accepted English gentility and compromise. In the nineteenth century, English Radicalism did not need to learn from France, as now it does not need to learn from Russia; it has at its source an achievement as glorious as theirs. Trotsky describes how, on his first visit to London, Lenin showed him the sights and said, with revolutionary disdain: " That's *their* Westminster Abbey!" But there are Englishmen who know that their forebears were the first to shatter the mystical sanction of the established order and who can say, with the same self-confidence: " That is *their* Church of England, *their* House of Lords, *their* public schools, *their* High Table!" The upholders of respectability and good-taste may, if they will, commemorate the Royal Martyr on January 30. They will not restore the broken idol. Only those nurtured in the tradition of Radical Dissent can say: " This was our day of victory !."

A. J. P. TAYLOR

VOCES INTIMAE

AN APPRECIATION OF ITMA

"THIS modern world," exclaims a character in Wells's city of the future, " is full of voices." Some, attached to lamp-posts, coiled behind a button, or barking from vans, we know already. " Scrumpatch speaking: a vote for Scrumpatch will ensure . . ." " Wakey, wakey, rise and shine." " Your stoppin' train for Gravesend—I repeat, for Grrravesend—is preparin' to leave platform seventeen." " Look right! Look left! Look right again! Thank you!" " Ici radio Andorre." " At the third stroke "—a tired sweet soprano for a change—" it will be eleven fifty-three and twenty seconds." While a few of these voices can be invoked at will, others—and they are on the increase—claw at us out of darkness and fog whether we will or not. The withdrawing room of the coming 'Eighties will have to be sound-proof.

Yet the voices aren't all bad, and they have taken a hold which probably we shall never be capable of throwing off. They don't only badger us on street corners and platforms. Radio has brought them into our houses, our lives, till they spring up within, like the voice of conscience. How many people to-day recollect the first voice that thus found its way into our individuality? Hitler's, of course. When he spoke—if it could be called speaking—the world attended, and not only the world but each private citizen in his home, furious, baffled, or aghast that this palpable enemy should have forced the doors. How he harangued, roared, screamed, gabbled, sometimes allowing himself a laugh or a sigh, as this or that trend of events tenderly engaged him; and even more dreadfully imposing than the knowledge that Czechoslovakia would fall was the presence of this implacable maniac in our midst. There he had been, with threatening consonants, whether we understood him or not; next day in the newspapers his speech would read cold, and we would gloomily study its contents. Yes, Hitler was the original artist of radio, which before him had been no more than an ingenious gadget for conveying tunes and talks over a distance.

War came. Other voices followed his: Churchill's, orotund, irrepressible, with chuckled confidences and a swashbuckling by-play of teeth. His jokes; no less than his sturdiness established him; " some neck, some chicken " was worth a major victory abroad at the time. And since these two with the world's weight on their shoulders had entered our privacy, the way was free for yet others. Lord Ha-ha, a valet from old melodrama, made our flesh creep and our lips twitch, and altogether we preferred his rich-toned brand of entertainment to his master's. The One-and-only, though still triumphant over fields of battle, had yielded place by our fire-sides to a row of jokers, among whom, quite unobtrusively at first, appeared the ebullient and, one might say, anonymous Mr. Handley. Not only was the name of his show, "It's That Man Again," taken from a famous *Daily Express* headline about Hitler, but he came to oust that bogy with a cocky, bantering, matter-of-fact, successful, non-stop Englishness of attack. From the first he rode a mad world (when we were in mortal danger of tumbling off) without turning a hair.

That breezily triumphant manner was essential to the time; without it neither Handley nor anyone else would have stood a chance of slipping in. The traditional clown—Grock, Chaplin, or any other—is pathetic, turned down in love, mumpish, brave perhaps, but endlessly beaten. That was just the kind of joker we *didn't* want; we ourselves were fatally inclined to be that already. Bumptiousness was the new order, and in a mad world. Then let that world be excruciating enough to be funny! So Handley started burbling away, Funf rang up with his comic accent and his emptily ominous threats, and out of the depths of imbecility would come a Cockney "Penny for the diver, sir?" briny as ocean from which it had risen.

I didn't in those days listen a great deal, and usually the news and a well-chosen concert satisfied me when I did. If by accident I tuned-in to Itma it was to encounter a private universe so bizarre in its snapshot cheerfulness that I fled dismayed. Something about it, however, other than recommendations from friends, must have appealed to me, so that I became an occasional listener for whom at least the fun was fast and the jokes, when I understood them, fresh. The whole show in its early phases enjoyed an air of mystery, and its adepts would speak of it in Masonic terms. After a peculiarly hard night's bombing one would hear the latest indecipherabilities from Itma exchanged between two fans over lunch. The effect was rather to warn off an outsider. Besides I was busy then with my own little earth-works of humour (the Londoner under bombing developed queer defences of the kind) and didn't yearn for the larger, brighter, noisier protectiveness of "Mr. Handley in person," Claud and Cecil, Mrs. Mopp rising up with all the paraphernalia of regrets and determination to "do you now, sir." Sometimes I couldn't help switching on, but so many adventures and intrusions had gone before, the pace was so insistent, the repetitions had come to be a bore without yet claiming my affection, and I thought of the whole performance (if I thought of it at all) as a brassily inveterate display of goats on pinnacles. The performers mightn't slip, in fact certainly would not, being diabolically efficient, but as a lazy listener I should. Other high-paced and not too funny descendants of the Marx Brothers and the Crazy Gang—the film *Hellzapoppin*, for example—had made similar demands on one's wobbling diaphragm.

When Itma came really to engross my fancy and to establish itself there with a sort of immortality, so that on Thursday evenings I seemed not so much to be listening to half-an-hour's music-hall as returning to some cloud-land stretching endlessly into past and future, blue-ceilinged, sunlit, buxom, yet with the immediate frightful bumps and backchat of a steam-laundry round the corner—when it was that this enthronement of a few people circling a microphone took place, and whether Itma accumulated genius as it went on or had it (though imperceptibly to me) from the start, I find it now impossible to determine. Perhaps the end of the war and the discovery that Itma didn't end with it, would roughly mark the date. The other war voices—even Churchill's—had died or receded, had lost their power of suddenly filling the room with geni-like proportions, and only this gang of comics remained, borne aloft on the shoulders of their inconspicuous though ruthlessly gabbling chieftain. This extra dimension they retained; through flights and faults—and heaven knows there were plenty of both—they even grew larger and more palpable. Accents from the street corner, the parlour, the committee room became individual beings—more, enormously living caricatures; for at a word one of them would suddenly sprout a belly like a sausage balloon and another would engage the passer-by in exasperated argument, all the while (it would finally be revealed) a ten-ton lorry was continuing to pin his foot.

Persons long-known too well ever to particularise, were thus drawn out of the crowd: the Colonel with his Kensington damps, his waffling courtliness and his arrow-like flight to the bottle, existent or not—almost too easily he could be called up by half the words in the dictionary; Atlas, who was sometimes as gigantic as his name, but squatted on a doorkeeper's stool, wheezing a tiny complaint about his health; Ruby Rockcake, railway refreshment-room girl, beset by the handy soldiery—"No cups outsierd! .... Oh it's you, is it? I can't turn me back now but somebody pinches me macaroons"; Mona Lott, kept going by the cheerfulness that laid a phosphorescence on fish-heads in gutters, dentists' apparatus, bony attic bedsteads, and a stranger wearing a cloth cap; mumblers, whiners, dowagers yapping against pekes, chairmen who growled through their boots, the Spoonerists, the tee-heeing Japs, the perpetrator of Welsh bulls and the inquisitor from Liverpool, the lady who blew a whistle whenever she saw a man, the gentleman who popped the question on a train journey and in the dark of the tunnel affixed a ring to the toe of an individual who had dropped in to ease his corns; so they go on, the preposterous and familiar, some of them embodiments of a single phrase, audible universes, down to the latest Itma creation of Sophie Tuckshop, whose coyness over awful meals and trailing titter apropos plugs and elastic filled, as they say, a long-felt want.

Boring they might be at times, these emanations with but a single thought, over-repetitive, over-brassy, yet from week to week, and month to month, they had astounding powers of recuperation. One encounter, one joke, would bring them new life, and after a really good number—one week, say, in three or four—the whole Itma idea, in all its phases, from bumping through the black-out to the drums of Tomtopia and home again, would shine like a freshly struck medal. And some of those phrases discovered regions never before approached by popular humour. Along what an Amazon did the introductory "Sninch of puff" lead its explorers, through what moist thickets and Freudian twilights, so that only the intrepid cheerfulness of Mr. Handley in all situations could persuade us we had not horribly misjudged our path. I remember that the one time I *saw* Itma—8.30, Thursday, at the Paris Street Cinema, Regent Street—was in the thick of this equivocal period when every word was distorted and one wondered how far they'd go and whether they could ever come back. A visit to the seaside was the ostensible scene; a bathing hut and bald heads bobbing in the surf had let loose a veritable Walpurgisnacht; the Joycean patter reeled on, and there on the stage were Mr. Handley and his colleagues leaning heads together and sweetly smiling, the dinner-jacketed band in the background, Mr. Ted Kavanagh scowling amiably under an exit light, and the audience ready with its applause like machine-gun fire—the most popular show in England. Very remarkable. It was a conjuring trick such as in a concert hall musicians will play when, with black coats and bored intentness, they give utterance to the Fire Bird Suite or the Haffner. Everything in Itma began and ended with the word, the voice.

And how much was due to the voice heard so often that it could be taken for granted, to the tap-running comedian, to Handley himself? More, obviously, than one allowed at the time. He both belonged to the Itma world and supplied the commentary on it; he was king and jester; he kept things going as no one else imaginably could; patter was to him the onion-laden breath of life—the dizzy heights reached by certain verbal formulae ("What a lovely morning for cutting into a steak-and-kidney pudding!") would scarcely have been attainable without that particular emphasis of dubious relish; and the *affaire* Hotchkiss provided at least a delightful and inexhaustible English variant on Groucho Marx and Miss Dupont. Tommy Handley, in fact, made the show, as the show had made him. Not until the startling news of his death did one realise, perhaps, quite how irresistibly he carried it, or the degree of affection instilled by the blithe bounder who crashed out of our loud-speakers: a vocal personality, by the way, curiously different from himself, modest, boyish, old-fashioned as a cartoon by Spy. Was he a great comedian? I don't know. But then equally I don't know whether Mr. Ted Kavanagh is a comic writer of genius. Between them, and with the help of Mr. Worsley, Mr. Jack Train and others, they produced *seriatim* the best comic adventures England has enjoyed since *The Pickwick Papers*; and now the air is blank again . . . except for the returning Babel.

G. W. STONIER

The Arts and Entertainment

THE THEATRE

"The School for Scandal," at the New

More than seventy years divide *The Way of the World*, the most polished of our artificial comedies from *The School for Scandal*, the most popular. In that interval Comedy dropped her bite and picked up morality; though this proposition might be emended by those who prefer the later comedy to the earlier: in the interval, they would say, Comedy dropped her coarseness and picked up a heart. In any case the change was endorsed by the best taste of the eighteenth century which had amused itself in the intervening years with Sentimental Comedies, all of which are now quite forgotten. Only Sheridan and Goldsmith survive. Their sententiousness is crossed with high spirits; they enjoy the best of both worlds.

Sheridan in *The School for Scandal* rescues from the Restoration the wit, the gaiety, the style and the shape, but he excludes the bawdry. And from sentimental comedy he takes the moral standpoint; for in Restoration comedy all the characters are wicked, but the dramatists don't care; certainly they never give us the chance of indulging the pleasure of condemning them. But in Sheridan we are shown just where, morally, we stand: we are invited to take sides. We are allowed to laugh at the Scandalous College and so can even safely sometimes laugh with them. We can rejoice, like some old family retainer, over Charles, the rip with a golden heart, and we can gratify our sense of our own virtue with the discomfiture of Joseph. The only equivocal thread in the play is Sir Peter Teazle's. The old husband who has saddled himself with a young wife is a favourite butt in comedy. A Restoration dramatist, eying him heartlessly, would have instantly planted the cuckold's horns. But Sentimental Comedy cannot do that: it must hold a balance which will allow for a reconciliation. So, just what quality of laughter we shall direct at Sir Peter's predicament is one of the tricky decisions in producing the play.

In his production at the New Sir Laurence Olivier leaves us at least in no doubt. Sir Peter is usually the hinge on which the *artificiality* of the comedy turns. But Sir Laurence, taking the part himself, plays it unashamedly and unequivocally as sentimental comedy at its two critical moments. And, if it can be argued that this upsets the comic balance of the play, at least he does it very brilliantly. But the effect of this only comes to flower in the second part—the play is given here with only one interval—and before we come to that there are a number of disagreeable observations to make about the rest of the performances.

This is a highly "stylised" production. All right. But stylisation is no good without style. What makes High Comedy [illegible] style, style in movement, style in wearing the clothes, style in gesture, style, above all, in delivering the lines—the lines which contain in themselves, if only the actors will allow us to hear them, the whole secret of this style, rhythm, balance, elegance, precision. Lack of style cannot be concealed behind fantastications of costume, affectations of speech, or elaborations of "production," which is what is attempted here. The Scandalous College are never for a moment allowed to be still and to speak; they weave in and out perpetually in a kind of dance as they exchange their gossip and this only emphasises the woeful fact that the actors have not yet learned how to speak these lines: only the Mrs. Candour, vociferously "codding" Dame Edith Evans, is always audible. (Before this production goes to represent us in Paris this defect must somehow be remedied.) Then much of the acting is frankly inadequate. Miss Vivien Leigh has been endowed by nature with the most fetching appearance; but she does not succeed in suggesting with it Lady Teazle. One traces in her voice and her gesture neither the country squire's daughter nor the fashionable wife: what one gets from her is just what one doesn't want for this century—an artshop daintiness. Her good moments are both of pathos, not comedy. Nor is either of the nephews up to it, and, though the Joseph Surface is a good effort by an actor obviously inexperienced in this mode, this leaves a sad gap.

Lastly, to cut short my complaints, let us move straight to the climax of the second part, Charles Surface's drinking party on which the uncle from the East, Sir Oliver, intrudes in disguise, and from which they all proceed upstairs for the auctioning of the pictures. The Charles here is the mildest of rakes. A sort of innocent Eton boy, all smiles and dimples, and the same smiles and dimples for every and any occasion; and the drinking scene itself the most muffish of debauches, a dormitory feast, no more. Then Mr. George Relph, who has carried off Sir Oliver splendidly up to this point, now throws all discretion to the winds (he may be driven to this by the lack of response from his Charles), adopts the broadest of farce techniques, clowns his way upstairs to the picture gallery, and the ancestors are polished off, with dimples from Charles, and smackings of the thigh from Sir Oliver, in less than no time. This hilarious scene can never quite fail. But if it is to be the best fun for the audience, it must really be less fun for the actor playing Sir Oliver. Here is the pattern comic situation: one in which the audience is "in the know" in advance, and our enjoyment depends on our being able to keep the childlike belief that the actors aren't. Too outrageous buffoonery at this point destroys that belief and spoils the scene. This is what Mr. Relph does. And after it we should have spent a rather damp interval if we hadn't known from the way Sir Laurence played his earlier scenes, that the screen episode, which opens the second part, was going to be splendid.

And it is. The effect has already been carefully prepared for us. At his first entrance, in that little speech where he lets us into his secret, Sir Laurence succeeds in defining exactly the attitude we are to take both to his appearance and to his predicament. Fifty in the text, he looks his fifty here too, and an inveterate bachelor, but a thoroughly *lovable* one. We can smile at his situation for he, too, recognises its wry humour, but already there are possibilities of pathos. This pathos comes out into the open in the second quarrel scene with Lady Teazle. At the beginning of this scene, it will be remembered, husband and wife have at last agreed to agree, until Sir Peter proceeds to spoil it all with ". . . in all our little quarrels, my dear, if you recollect, my love, you always began first." So up it flares again between them, a full-scale row, which is suddenly brought to a dead stop by Lady Teazle's exclaiming of a baronet she refused that he would have been a much better match—"for his estate was just as good as yours, and he has broke his neck since we were married." They are on opposite sides of the stage as she says this, and that thrust brings the quarrel and our laughter to a sudden hush. The pause is lengthened and dragged; Sir Peter's jaw visibly falls: he suddenly looks quite broken. She, with her back to him, feels that she has gone too far and would like to make amends, but cannot find the way to, and finally, out of embarrassment as it seems, picks up her raillery again and exits on the wave of it, leaving him still shattered. (This is Miss Leigh's first good scene.) It is a most affecting moment, affectingly played, though at once the difficulty of this interpretation of the part reveals itself. It leaves badly in the air Sir Peter's curtain line, about her keeping her temper: "I'll not bear her presuming to keep her temper. No! She may break my heart but she shall not keep her temper." This is, after all, in the spirit of pure artificial comedy, which we cannot suddenly switch back to out of the extreme of pathos.

Thus we are prepared for the treatment of the screen incident, far the best scene in this production, admirably staged and played (given this emphasis). When the screen goes down to discover Lady Teazle, the hush and the pause used in the quarrel scene are repeated and prolonged. Sir Laurence drops his "Lady Teazle by all that's damnable": he is beyond anger or reconciliation: he is defeated, though he manages to summon a fine dignity to meet his defeat. He outfaces Joseph's stumbling explanation and turns his back on Lady Teazle's confession, and so does not see the kiss of regret she drops from her hand before she leaves (this is Miss Leigh's second good moment); and then cutting short Joseph's sentiments marches off. All excellent, excellent; although it does produce difficulties—this going so far into pathos: for husband and wife have still to be reconciled. Later Sir Laurence has to resort to a rather "corny" device to redress the balance—a sentimental silhouette of husband and wife kissing which brings us an unwelcome reminder of *Quality Street*. A further disadvantage of putting so much strength into the pathos of this scene is that there is still a whole act of pure comedy to go, and with the uncle-nephew scenes going virtually for nothing, the play runs down. Yet this is only to repeat that Sir Laurence's supporting company is distinctly weak. He can carry a play on his own shoulders well enough, when it is a one-part play like *Richard III*, but he cannot carry *The School for Scandal* without more support.

Mr. Cecil Beaton's drop curtains and backcloths, against which the piece is played, are wholly successful. His dresses less so. They are over-prettified and they sometimes add to that faint whiff of *Quality Street* which crops up here and there throughout the evening.

T. C. WORSLEY

RADIO NOTES

THE most interesting and so far the most successful discussion of religion that has been broadcast for many months is the Home Service Tuesday evening series *Clearing the Ground*, between two dons of Reading University, Professor Hodges and Mr. Vernon Mallinson. They are debating how far Christianity can satisfy the needs of modern man, and they make a remarkably well-balanced and sympathetic team: Professor Hodges, a philosopher, is a member of the Church of England who was once an atheist, Mr. Mallinson an educationalist who was once a Christian and is now an unbeliever. The trouble with most religious discussions is that the contenders never come to grips at all; they do not so much debate as dig themselves into intellectual positions from which they have no intention of budging; and closed minds cannot speak to closed minds. What is excellent in *Clearing the*

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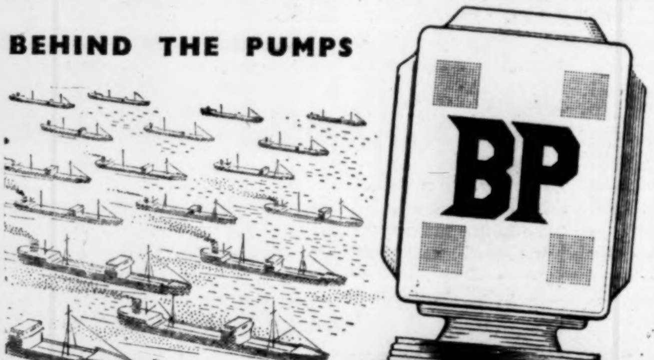

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Ground is that neither speaker gives the impression of having a closed mind. Rather, the illusion is of the microphone eavesdropping on the conversation of two intellectually able men who are both passionately concerned with their subject, both equally convinced of the truth as they see it, and who are prepared to match their convictions, test them against each other's and try to understand. It is this last which is the most important. One feels with most religious discussions that in the last resort the speakers do not wish to understand each other; but Professor Hodges and Mr. Mallinson debate as though open to conviction.

A less successful discussion, at any rate partly religious in basis, was the Third Programme's triangular *Voluntary Euthanasia*. I felt that all three speakers were bowed down by a sense of the gravity of the subject and the occasion; but what was more serious was the poorness of the script. The programme did not so much end as peter out; if it had been cut by fifteen minutes it would have appeared more impressive. But what ultimately defeated the programme was the fact that for the Roman Catholic speaker, Mr. Richard O'Sullivan, K.C., the subject did not admit of discussion at all; for him euthanasia was merely a polite word for murder, and voluntary euthanasia a euphemism for suicide. Since discussion was impossible, it seems to me that the form of the programme was wrong and that speakers and listeners alike would have been better served if the case for and against legalised euthanasia had been presented in a series of contrasted statements.

A dull programme on Amanda Ros would be difficult to imagine, and the *Amanda McKittrick Ros* of Mr. Denis Johnstone and Mr. Douglas Cleverdon was anything but dull. It was, indeed, brilliantly funny. The material, of course, was a gift, but script, production and acting were all equally witty. It is, I think, almost the rarest thing in radio for any programme, however amusing, to move the solitary listener to loud laughter of the kind one experiences in the theatre or the cinema. *Amanda McKittrick Ros* did just this. So too, I imagine, would *Bartholomew Fair* if seen upon the stage. As broadcast in the Third Programme the other evening it conspicuously didn't. The actors were obviously enjoying themselves, and so was the producer; but what did the listener get out of it? Not much more, I fancy, than the sensation of being buried for two hours under a torrential spate of words, some of them certainly very funny, those of Mr. Esmé Percy's Zeal-of-the-Land Busy particularly, but in the main fatiguing because so torrential. The fault, I think, was not the producer's; it was simply that Ben Jonson is probably unplayable in terms of radio; the least radiogenic of dramatists, he suggests on the air little more than a breathless welter of confusion. What then is the Third Programme to do with dramatists like Jonson? I suspect that the answer is that it should be less ambitious and be content to give us merely selected scenes based, perhaps, on a study of certain characters from the plays, something in the way of those admirable little programmes we used to hear during the war on Shakespeare's minor characters. For radio does best when it recognises its limitations.

William Salter

FIGARO

"Say good-bye now to pastime and play, lad . . . here's an end of your romps in the hay, lad; here's an end of your games with the girls." No, these hob-nailed monosyllables don't make a pretty equivalent for the liquid, insinuating phrases of Da Ponte (*Non più andrài, farfallone amoroso . . . delle belle turbando il riposo, Narcisetto, Adoncino d'amor*); but Professor Dent's version has a homely liveliness which does well enough in our cheerful Islington *Volksoper*: there, *Figaro* becomes a *Singspiel*, and what could be more natural than a *Singspiel* at Sadler's Wells? At Covent Garden (too large, really, even for a performance of Glyndebourne standards) the want of elegance is disturbing. Mr. Geraint Evans makes a vivacious Figaro, but his attempt to project staccato English phrases into a large auditorium leads him into a continual disregard of the vocal line. A similar fault mars other performances; for instance, the imposing and resonant Alinaviva of Herr Hans Braun, who often blusters his way through passages which demand, above all things, polish.

Polish, ease, clarity and flow: these are the qualities most necessary to any Mozartian performance, vocal or instrumental, and in our day the most rarely achieved. In Mozart's letters, the highest praise he can give to a performance of his music is to say that "it flowed like oil"; but the overture to *Figaro*, under Dr. Rankl, flowed—well, like a mountain torrent. All through the first act it was extraordinary how many beauties and subtleties in the score went for nothing. For instance, I have never heard Cherubino's miraculous *Non so più* fall so completely flat. Why? Partly because Mme. Zareska had evidently been cast solely for her appropriate appearance and couldn't articulate the music; partly because the speed was too fast for the tune to be apprehended by the audience, let alone the ravishing orchestral colouring. The quicksilver G major duet for Cherubino and Susanna in the second act met a similar fate; there simply weren't enough *audible* notes. "Too many notes, my dear Mozart," said the Emperor Joseph; at Covent Garden he would find less to complain of. Mozart, however, would be amazed: amazed at the continual absence of a true *legato*, at the lack of sensuous, lyrical beauty, alike in the orchestra and on the stage, and at the amount of physical movement expected of a singer in the very middle of a phrase.

In the last two acts things greatly improved; there was a touch of incipient distinction about Miss Fisher's *Dove sono*, the Sextet went capitally, and the finale of the last act was both well sung and exceptionally clear in action (the producer, Peter Brook, was as successful here as he was maladroit at the end of Act I). Unfortunately, the new sets (by Rolf Gérard) declined from undistinguished to downright illiterate; it is a great pity that so much money should have been spent on flights of steps and balustrades in the Edwardian municipal style: I fear they are built to last. Mme Schwarzkopf was a good Susanna, and would be better still if she could be less overpoweringly Austrian; the best sung and best acted performance came from Mr. Howell Glynne as Dr. Bartolo—in fact, from Sadler's Wells, which is the proper London home of Mozartian comedy.

Desmond Shawe-Taylor

THE MOVIES

"The Small Back Room," at the Empire

"Answers to Stalin," March of Time

To the proposition that film-makers sponge abominably on bad old novels and plays must be added the rider that sometimes a good novel or play is picked on, and sometimes (but far more rarely) the result is a good film. This last achievement may fairly be claimed of *The Small Back Room;* it is a better novel than *Mine Own Executioner*, and it has made a better film. Except for a happy ending in which the self-tortured hero throws off his malaise after unscrewing the bomb-cap, the book has been pretty faithfully adhered to; and if the expressionist episode of the Demon Whisky shocks our sense of screen fitness—well, no film by Messrs. Powell and Pressburger would be complete without its streak of vulgarity. But couldn't it—this vulgar signature—be made a little less obtrusive? Mightn't we be encouraged to look for it as for the fleeting fat man in a corner of a Hitchcock thriller? That ten-foot-high whisky bottle lurching about the drawing-room was designed, I fancy, to offset the deadly little container on the empty shore. A bright idea! Moral for P. and P.: kill bright ideas, or save them all up for one awful film.

But, a couple of lapses apart, *The Small Back Room* brilliantly and modestly accomplishes what it set out

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Chairman's Annual Statement

Mr. A. Harold Bibby in his statement records a very satisfactory year with increased profit and considerable strengthening of reserves. Commenting on fiscal and economic matters he says inflationary pressure has not been eliminated but there has been improvement, and he is glad to think that wiser counsel has prevailed in regard to the nation's finances. There has been great improvement in the balance of trade abroad but we are not yet living within our means and even in 1952, when Marshall Aid ends, a mere balancing of exports against imports will not solve the problem of repaying our immense external debt, nor provide for improvement in the standard of living.

EFFECTS OF HIGH TAXATION

The nation has to spend approximately £2,000 millions per annum until 1952 on replacements and capital goods and Mr. Bibby thinks that the provision of a large Budget surplus in April last year is a measure of forced saving to enable the Government to provide the sums necessary for this expenditure, as the classes who previously found the capital for industry now find it impossible to save sufficient for this purpose owing to heavy taxation. Not only must we replace fixed capital goods, such as machinery and buildings, but the effects of inflation and high taxation have depleted business working capital.

In his view it is doubtful if depreciation allowances by the Revenue have ever been sufficient to cover normal replacements and obsolescence in a progressive economy and they are certainly not sufficient in a period of inflation. The Bank is well aware from its day to day business of the shortage of working capital and doubtless the increase of bank advances is in part due to this. The function of the banks is not to provide a long-term fixed capital which must come from savings.

A substantial portion of the country's savings may come to be represented by forced saving and Mr. Bibby expresses doubt if such an arrangement will succeed because of its artificiality and the risks that Budget surpluses might be used under pressure for purposes other than capital expenditure on sound productive lines. Furthermore, there is no incentive for private initiative.

Reduction in Government expenditure is necessary to reduce taxation. All problems centre on production at competitive prices. While good progress has been made in the past year, there is no alternative to hard work to restore the nation's prosperity.

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to do. It brings back the war effort, the war worry, the wars within war. National emergency re-shuffles the social pack, dealing out—wherever we may happen to pick them up—curious hands. In the particular back room envisaged by Mr. Balchin, important work was being done, but how essential too was the battle for a carpet in so-and-so's office, the pincers movement against the Minister, the pic-nicking, the hotted-up research, the conflict between overall and uniform, the incipient break-down in the individual mind! These casually yet pungently contrived situations the film makes vivid; the people look genuine and absorbed and joke tiredly; their surroundings have that awful air of make-shift permanence we all got to know so well. An untouched bottle or the table reserved for V-day, the pub stool among the allied nations, the inconclusive love affair, and the torn blind that never gets mended, mark time with the years. Enormous effort, and almost complete stoppage. This is what everyone in *The Small Back Room* to some extent suffers from: and sensitive acting, particularly in the minor parts (Cyril Cusack as the uniformed stammerer with troubles at home, Jack Hawkins as the advertiser turned civil servant), gives the scene an ironical poignancy. The hero with an aluminium foot and a jagged conscience (David Farrar) takes it out of his girl (Kathleen Byron) with at least more trenchancy than usually marks a rough passage, and if they don't between them quite fulfil the book's conflict, that is the necessary difference between an hour and a third on the screen and three hundred printed pages.

The latest March of Time issue puts the case against Russia, heftily enough, yet with a curious vagueness of attack. Everywhere (the little flags tell us on the map) Russia has encroached by force, and America has answered with Marshall Aid. Two-thirds of the film describes the operations of E.C.A., and more than half of that time we seem to be watching Mr. Paul Hoffman as he gets in and out of aeroplanes or approaches committee tables. The Voice, emphatic as ever, fails to clinch. Is it (the least informed spectator must wonder) all war on one side and all peace on the other? Are vague threats any reply to ruthless action? If the March of Time could find no more compelling answer to this, would it not have done better to keep silent and await events?

William Whitebait

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Correspondence

EQUALISATION OF INCOME

Sir,—There is a passing reference to me in your last issue but one which may leave an impression that I am a crude and negligible advocate of "dividing-up" the national income in equal shares, and that Sidney Webb was in favour of *laisser-faire* bargaining.

Let me clear this up.

In the early days of the Fabian Society we felt superior to the man in the street, to whom dividing-up was the be-all and end-all of Socialism. I gave the Society a shock when I suddenly declared that the man in the street was right, and the superior persons wrong; that where capitalism had failed utterly was not in production but in distribution; and that without economic equality there could be no democracy, no optimum order of production, no justice, no eugenic breeding: in short, no Socialism. The Webbs, momentarily taken aback, at once agreed with me; and from that time equalisation became an article in the Fabian programme, and, bowdlerised as equality of opportunity, in all the programmes.

But I had to solve the problem of how to set about it. An instantaneous equal division would be catastrophic: it would destroy civilisation, because the national dividend would be at most a few pounds or even shillings per family; and the next generation of proletarians would be left without culture or instructed directors whose cost of production includes not only food and drink, clothing and lodging, costing no more for an Einstein than for a hewer of wood and drawer of water, but a home in a handsome house with pictures, books, and a piano in it, and a school within its means in which the children can qualify for a university degree or a profession.

The cost of this fixed the basic income to which all incomes should be levelled up. I put it roughly at £4,000 a year; and H. G. Wells made the same estimate simultaneously. Its real cost, with rent and education socialised, would be more like £800. The figures do not matter: the point is the establishment of a basic income as a necessary political conception.

Next came the question, what is to be the test of equality? My answer was, Intermarriageability. People brought up on family incomes of a few pounds a week (I can remember when most families had less than a pound) are not marriageable with millionaire folk. But if millionaires with £50,000 a year would not marry girls brought up on £4,000, very few of them could get married at all. Consequently the need for arithmetically equal incomes ceases when the basic income is reached. When everybody has the basic income it will not matter a rap if one in a hundred thousand or so has ten times as much to play with. Such prodigies cannot live beyond the basic income because they cannot eat fifty dinners a day nor wear a thousand suits of clothes.

Until there is enough for the basic income to go all round, inequality will exist in money as it always will in mental capacity. And we shall have, among other absurdities, agreement between all parties that increased production is the supreme need of the moment, yet with all parties doing their worst to sabotage it—the Capitalist Party denouncing the Socialist half of it as a tyranny, and the Labour Party the other half because it is private enterprise.

I have explained all this again and again for thirty years; but, as action and reaction are equal and opposite, I had better have avoided of all things explicitness and lucidity. As this is against my nature, I must go on being misunderstood and contradicted by critics with whom I am in agreement.

G. Bernard Shaw

BRITAIN'S FOUR-YEAR PLAN

Sir,—In the atmosphere of successful achievement created by the announcement of all-time records of output and productivity, there is a real danger lest certain features of the Four-Year Plan presented by Britain to O.E.E.C. may receive less critical examination than is required.

(1) The proportion of the national income devoted to investment is to be kept stationary despite the postulated increase in national income. No doubt investment will be better distributed than pre-war, when net investment in industry was insignificant. Still, in view of the vast increase of productivity in the United States, the recovery of Germany and Japan, and the far higher rate of increase already achieved in Eastern Europe, it seems questionable whether the public realise the dangerous implications of this decision. The wish to reduce our request for Marshall Aid is presumably a (mistaken) motive for it.

(2) The Government does not seem to contemplate special efforts to reorganise industry, e.g., through Development Councils. If it did, it could count on an increase in productivity greater than is assumed in the Plan.

(3) Further projected decontrol of prices, production, and certain (unproductive) investment, instead of the refinement of the principles of control, will once more tend to reduce the effectiveness of total effort and threaten to unloose wage demands as real wages get under pressure.

Some features of the Plan in the international field seem also questionable, apart from the threat of increased military commitments to British solvency.

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The change in the U.S. attitude, the most striking expression of which is found in President Truman's inaugural address, gives a reasonable chance for the re-establishment of a multilateral world economic system, such as has never been given by Bretton Woods, and one of which utmost use should be made. Admittedly, even in this more favourable position, a multilateral approach implies taking some calculated risks. Among these are the fulfilment of agreed plans by other countries, especially those which, like France, have no effective controls, and the maintenance of the full co-operation of the United States. The Plan implies, however, that Britain has not yet sufficiently reorientated her policy of retreat towards bilateralism. More particularly, we are cutting our dollar deficit in far too mechanical a way, instead of using a fuller U.S. aid both to increase our productive investment and to promote European recovery by accepting in our relations to Europe a greater degree of multilateral trade reposing on sterling. There is a grave danger that we shall be forced to unilateral concessions without additional help and without assurance that the French plans will be implemented. The Americans will not be impressed by the cut in our demand for aid, but by our capacity for effective leadership in establishing an expanding multilateral world system.

The success of the multilateral approach implies a much greater degree of European economic co-operation and this demands a reorganisation of O.E.E.C. and a modification of its methods of work. Piecemeal compromises on the basis of independent national plans will not create a viable Western European economy. In the longer run it implies also that the U.S. must consent to unilateral concessions in commercial policy, such as toleration of transitional discrimination against her and one-sided tariff concessions. In addition, the U.S. must give effective help in promoting progress in under-developed areas and thus providing new markets for the expanding European output. Single European countries cannot solve their dollar problem alone, except by undue and unnecessary hardship which would in the end have serious unfavourable repercussions in the United States. This is being realised by the statesmanlike proposals of President Truman. It is for the British Government to make full use of this opportunity.

Oxford. T. BALOGH

MEN OVER THE WATER

SIR,—I entirely agree with Mr. Vallance that the Ministry of Education should adopt a more positive policy towards European Voluntary Workers. In my experience the attempt to teach the E.V.W. English has not been conspicuously successful and will remain so whilst the initiative is left to the E.V.W. himself. Few of them have shown the same inclination to pick up the language in the way that was so remarkable among the P.O.W.s. Similarly, many of them are lamentably, and dangerously, unfamiliar with British ways and customs. During the late summer of 1948 a W.E.A. branch in Northants obtained the services of a tutor who went to some considerable trouble to prepare a short course on Interpreting England. A tremendous effort was made to arouse the interest of the E.V.W.s employed on the land and in the hospitals, etc., but the course had to be abandoned after the second meeting because of the lack of support it received.

The W.E.A. could play a big part in educating these men (and women) for citizenship and democracy, but even assuming that future attempts to form classes were more successful than that I have mentioned, the difficulties will be enormous until the students have acquired a better knowledge of the English language. If the E.V.W. does regard himself in this country merely as a bird of passage, then there is clearly some ground for his disinclination to learn our language, but there would also seem to be some equally good grounds for the Government to reconsider its attitude towards his continued stay here and the civic rights and privileges he is allowed to enjoy. If, on the other hand, he does want to stay and be assimilated into our population, it might be worth while considering the suggestion that he should be compelled—as our children are—to learn the rudiments of our language and something of our funny little ways and customs and our ideas of tolerance and democracy. L. J. MAYNARD

Little Addington,
Kettering.

AID TO THE ARABS

SIR,—In his article "A Day in the Negev," Mr. Crossman refers to army camps in the Gaza area being "handed over intact to the local authorities on May 15." In fact all these camps were evacuated and left standing empty about three months before the end of the Mandate. Local villagers took possession, and in a remarkably short space of time nearly everything had been stripped and carried away. By May 1 there was little left except the odd chimney to which Mr. Crossman refers. From all this a slight increase in domestic comfort in Magdal and Khan Gunis may have resulted, but certainly the Arabs gained no tactical advantage.

A more serious matter is the question of all the military equipment handed over to the Arab Legion when it was common knowledge that Abdullah was to declare war on the Jews on May 15. One definite example of this may be of interest. On May 12 I went from Jerusalem to Jericho and handed to the Arab Legion commander there all the petrol from Jerusalem not needed for the evacuation, nearly 15,000 gallons. A current black market price of about £1 a gallon is a good indication of how valuable this must have been to the Arabs when three days later they opened their attack on Jerusalem.

107 Herciel Road, DEREK HERBERT
Hillingdon, Middlesex.

THE CHILD LISTENER

SIR,—Here are some comments on "The Child Listener" by one mother who for years has wanted a programme for under-fives such as you advocate.

First let me deal with the assumption, quoted to me by a B.B.C. official as the basis of policy, that a child is incapable of "listening" under the age of five years. Can anyone who deals with these children accept this? Most of us have seen toddlers listening with rapt attention to their favourite gramophone records; they learn, with uncanny facility, poems, songs and finger plays suited to their ages; and many of them listen to Ann Driver's Music and Movement for Infants, and to Let's Join In (both primarily designed for the 5-7 age group) as two "treats" in a week containing no other daytime programme they can understand.

I would suggest that what is needed for under-fives is two 15-minute periods daily at about 11 and 3, with familiar songs and games to join in, perhaps a little health and speech training, and perhaps (how welcome it would be) a suggested occupation for the half-hour following programme's end. This would delight the child. And it would refresh the mother in her care for the toddler in just the same way as the health and cookery talks help those aspects of her work.

The B.B.C. may claim that there is little demand for such a programme. Has Listener Research investigated the question? It should be remembered that toddlers cannot voice their listening needs, nor are their mothers a very vocal section of the community with their seven-day week and 12-hour day, and their lack of a T.U. Yet both mothers and toddlers are particularly dependent on radio for help and entertainment. Even if the audience were very small, I suggest that this programme would still be valuable and, being so short and tuneful, would probably not cause the most confirmed "background listener" to switch off. In fact, I fancy it would appeal to invalids and the elderly quite as much as our present ration of jazz, "melody" and school broadcasts.

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undoubted success, Woman's Hour, on the air. Will it be another generation before we get Toddlers' Time?

The opinion of the Nursery School Association and of Australian listeners, for whom I have heard this sort of programme already exists, would be most interesting.
B. H. BRANDES, *Hon. Sec.*,
Chalfont St. Peter Parents' Association

SIR,—May I rise in defence of the B.B.C. on its attitude to The Child Listener? If the child is unfortunate enough to come from a home where the wireless is kept switched on all day indiscriminately, he will indeed develop the habit of "not listening." This is a problem for the home and not the B.B.C. I would say that one hour a day is quite enough listening time for the child under twelve and that the Children's Hour does, in fact, provide a very varied programme "true to nature and life, yet stimulating to the imagination." To claim that "the obvious tendency will be for young listeners of to-day to grow up predominantly into the ready-made Light division in the B.B.C.'s audience" is ridiculous. Children's Hour, by talks, plays, music, Nature, Parliament, etc., does, in fact, an admirable job of educating the child listener for serious adult programmes. The fact that Children's Hour is often both entertaining and interesting to an intelligent adult shows how wide of the mark your correspondent's statement falls.

That an intelligently planned programme of morning listening during holidays should be provided for the over-twelves I quite agree. But I very much doubt the response of the under-fives to the proposed "wireless teacher." A child of that age requires visual as well as aural stimulus. Perhaps the idea could be put into cold storage until television is universally established.
LESLIE BARKER.
Brook Farm, Blissford, Fordingbridge, Hants.

LICENSING BILL

SIR,—I have just read your issue of December 18th, in particular that part referring to the proposed Licensing Bill. Judging by your comments, I suggest that you are not in possession of the full facts as they concern the licensed victualling trade.

You make a statement to the effect that "the landlord isn't much worried whether he works for the State or a brewery, as it is just the same to him." As a tenant landlord merely rents his public house from a brewery and is bound to supply their beer and similar products without any restriction (apart from times of material shortage) on how much he buys, how much he sells or how much he charges within certain limits, it is certainly incredible that there should be landlords who are willing to work hard to increase their custom with a view not to enriching themselves but helping the State. I imagine that from your statement the difference between a tenant landlord and a manager landlord, who merely works for a fixed salary, was not known in your office. Incidentally, by far the largest proportion of landlords are tenants and are thus directly interested in making their hostelries more attractive.

You make the further statement that the public-houses in Carlisle are no different to those elsewhere except in sanitary arrangements, with the inference that the State provides better lavatories than the brewers. That the lavatories in the Carlisle public-houses are better than those in the average "pub" I am in no position either to confirm or deny, but here again I suggest you are making a comparison between the new houses built by the State and old houses owned by the breweries. Comparison between the State-owned houses and those built by the breweries since the date of State management would, I submit, show no difference at all in standards and general adequacy of toilet facilities.

Further to this last statement, your correspondent or reporter who goes into a town where darts, dominoes and music are not allowed in the public-houses and then says he sees no difference between them and houses in other towns is either extremely unobservant or dishonest.
J. M. GREGORY
Officers' Mess, Royal Air Force,
Ismailia, M.E.F.

AUSTRIAN SOCIALISTS

SIR,—In his review of *The Tragedy of Austria*, by Julius Braunthal, on Oct. 23rd, A. J. P. Taylor writes: ". . . The Austrian Socialist . . . muddled into civil war without a programme and without equipment; at least they fired a few shots, had a few victims . . ."

On reading this I wrote at once to a friend in Vienna to get data to correct Professor Taylor's statement and received only now a letter from which I quote.

According to Police records, 500 Socialists and 200 Government troops were killed. But according to Socialist estimates they lost about thrice that number, e.g., 1,500. Nine of the leaders were captured and hanged—one of them was carried to the gallows on a stretcher. The number of wounded cannot now be ascertained.

The Government's various troops (regular army, police force, gendarmerie and "Heimwehr") numbered 60,000 as against 10,000 militant Socialists. The Austrian army shelled the workers' flats with 15 cm. (6in.) guns. My friend and Major Eifler, the Chief of Staff of the Schutzbund, were fellow-prisoners in Dachau. In discussing the past events it was Eifler who assured my friend that the Revolution was well planned and that there was no shortage of arms. The main cause of failure was the non-co-operation of the population at large.

84 Greencroft Gardens,
Hampstead, N.W.6.
GEORGE W. BURGER

SOUTH AFRICAN LIBERAL

SIR,—Idly strolling in Hyde Park last Sunday, we joined the throng listening to a Negro speaker. Next to us an argument developed between a West African and a White man, who turned out to be a South African. The latter, in answer to accusations against the White "Herrenvolk" of the Union, began to speak in condemnation of the treatment meted out to the "native" population, not forgetting to extol the work of the Rev. Michael Scott. He spoke eloquently and with obvious sincerity for almost three hours (to his own amazement, I think) and long before he finished, the original African speaker had descended from his platform and was listening in horrified silence with the rest of us.

The young South African, who stopped answering questions only when his voice gave out, finally disappeared through the crowd, and we went home, saddened yet made wiser by the courageous speech of an unknown champion of racial equality.

17 Cranhurst Road,
London, N.W.2.
E. HARTSTONE.

H. G. WELLS

SIR,—I am preparing the authorized biography of H. G. Wells. I would be most grateful if anyone who has unpublished recollections of him, or who has any letters or papers written by him or to him that they might care to let me see, would be kind enough to write to me.
ANTHONY WEST.
The Old Rectory,
Tarrant Hinton, Blandford, Dorset.

THE NATIONAL THEATRE

SIR,—I am engaged in writing a volume on the British National Theatre movement from its inception to the present time, and should be very grateful for the sight of any letters, or documents or other information on this subject with which your readers might be good enough to favour me. Copies would be made of any material used, and the originals returned immediately. Correspondence should be addressed to me c/o the Publishers, Messrs. Faber & Faber, 24 Russell Square, London, W.C.1.
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BOOKS IN GENERAL

If Baron Münchausen had returned to life in the Twenties or Thirties, we know where he would have found his companions. He would have settled among the surrealists. We can imagine him retelling his favourite lies: how he shot a cherry stone into the antlers of a stag so that the animal grew a tree out of its head; how he trained a beanstalk to the moon and preserved the trill of an opera singer in spirits. Such trifles as thrusting his arm down the gullet of a wolf until he reached the tail and turned the beast inside out like a glove; or the fur coat that went mad when it was bitten by a dog, would not surprise the script writers of the *Chien Andalou* and would indeed seem tame to a painter like Dali who could draw a skull committing sodomy with a piano or the corpse of a woman caressed by the finest Burgundian snails. But one can imagine the Baron a little envious of his successors. They disdained the extrovert. They scorned to boast about unarmed combat with teams of lions. A far richer field was being tilled by them and one in which there was no possible check; they could pretend to evidence; they could threaten the world with revolutionary consequences, for they had discovered the Unconscious. The Baron had to invent memories of his youth in Siberia; they recalled their experiences of life in the womb; and taking simple objects like crutches, candlesticks, slippers, glasses of milk and others which are not mentionable, could take the reader or onlooker slumming through their dreams.

The chances denied to the Baron Münchausen can be seen in the profusely illustrated autobiography of Salvador Dali*, the stage Spaniard and surrealist, which has only just been published here. In a brilliant and indignant review of the American edition, published in his *Critical Essays,* a few years ago, Mr. George Orwell said that the book stank. What evidently finished Mr. Orwell was that this gaudy exhibitionist ran out of Barcelona when he saw the Civil war begin, ran out of France when the Germans came in—why shouldn't he, he was a Spaniard?—and went to America to repent, turned Roman Catholic, became respectable and made a lot of money. It is a relief to hear that Dali has been "changed"; his social instincts were not noticeably strong; but we now know there were a lot of irresponsible people in the world, and whatever Dali's sins may have been, his natural vice is really vulgarity. It is a type of vulgarity which has often cropped up in Catalonia, a Mediterranean excess well-recognised elsewhere in Spain, violent, egotistical, fantastic and fundamentally childish; and in the Mediterranean provinces it has a local flavour which is lost when the article is exported. The same may be said (as Dali himself points out) of the famous *Contes Marseillaises.* When Dali used one of his canvases as a hammock, stuck his head through a hole in it into a bucket of water and told his admiring friends that he was inventing a counter-submarine, the story went round Figueras and was explosively welcomed as a fantasy proper to a native of the town. We must not be surprised that a Catalan—a business-like race—should desire his fantastic and his secret life to be public; and that if he bit off a bat's head, or pushed a child off a bridge, screamed when he saw grasshoppers, or covered himself with a solution of goat dung before going to see his mistress, he would tell us all this in a whisper. Nobody whispers in Figueras. In the Mediterranean everyone has something to shout and in Catalonia everyone has something to sell.

Today we are not likely to be shocked by Dali's shouting Spanish individuality; we are simply bored by it. When we have weeded out what is not boring, there is not much left. We are left with an unconsciously comic document of small literary interest but with some psychological and historical point. Salvador Dali is in his forties now and grew up with the century. He was the son of a respectable notary in Figueras who saw with dismay his son's talent as a painter, but soon did everything to encourage him. The boy was spoiled (which is common in Spanish families of the middle class) grew up conceited, timid, violent and unstable. There is an extraordinary scene when the young exhibitionist is going in for an art examination, and has to draw a figure to the exact measurements of the model. Of course, he draws a minute figure instead. For five days the father pleads and argues with the boy, even to the extent of crawling on the floor and trying to plot out the figure with things from the dinner table; the. boy, perceiving the hysterical state of his father, feigns stupidity and lack of memory and uses every device to torture him. Earlier and later, all the boy's behaviour is outrageous. Too timid to make a public speech he gets up and screams a slogan which will annoy everyone in this Francophile town: Long Live Germany and Russia. On another occasion, he throws his lecturer's table into the audience. He works up a mania for seeing death's heads everywhere and screams when a grasshopper with its skull-like head jumps on him. This wrecks his school career for the boys throw grasshoppers at him in order to hear him scream. He throws himself downstairs so many times a term. He is, of course, expelled.

With all his truculence—which is, after all, not so uncommon; any patient on the couch does quite as well, if not better—goes the conventional preference for fantasy to experience in sexual life. The artist-cad appears; he becomes friends with a girl and systematically sets about rousing her senses, without loving her or attempting to satisfy them; this he does, he quickly assures us not out of moral restraint but in order to enslave the girl and dominate her, so that he has only got to say, Run or Walk or Lie Down and she will obey. There is no doubt that many pure, adolescent love affairs have this perversity. Dali has, of course, a strong feeling for the Napoleonic; it is the fruit of timidity, the famous petit bourgeois vice. He is quite sure when King Alfonso visits the students in Madrid that the King gives him a private signal of recognition; one crowned head noting another. Later on, he is avowedly jealous of the irresistible Lorca and runs away to hide from his affronting success. So intense had Dali's Narcissism become—look up his masturbation records—that until 30 he is apparently impotent. His marriage appears to be fortunate. The lady had evidently formed her own opinion of the drama of his inner life. He had explained his obsession with death to her. Gradually working herself (and him) into a state of hysterical frenzy she begged him to kill her. She was a "case" too! Dali was very put out by this competition and suggests that it cured him. He is not without humour. To pass the subject off, he discussed throwing her off the bell tower at Toledo. For a "host of reasons" this did not seem feasible. What this "host" was is not mentioned. But the couple were often short of money for their fares.

The reader will be struck by how old-fashioned all this stuff is. The ejaculations of the *avant garde,* the pronunçamientos, the frantic determination to be original by shocking, suggest to the mind the faded settee cover, the joke-shop trick. The interesting thing is that Dali is a very clever man—and a gifted pen and ink artist who, if he had not been "naughty-naughty" would have done modestly well in illustrating furniture catalogues, or the historical story in the glossy magazines—and he knows very well what he is doing in this book. He aimed at the rich and he got there. Like the rising political leaders of the day he strutted about giving "orders." And, in one sense, it is obvious that surrealist painting was prophetic; we have seen those destructions, those intestines, those bloodied limbs. His disgusting preoccupations, decked out with psychological magic, led him to conclusions not dissimilar to those planned by the destroyers of Europe. He claimed, Spanish fashion, to be the incarnation of the period. Now, of course, he has repented. Back to tradition. No more talk of the need to assassinate art. The destructive brilliance of the modern Spanish mind, its unconsidered violence reacts and falls into the coma of commercial orthodoxy. Mr. George Orwell suggests, very shrewdly, that Dali was merely Barrie turned inside out. Dali puts it in the best orating manner of the Catalan café:

> At the moment when I arrived in Paris, the intellectual elements were rotten with the nefarious and already declining influence of Bergsonism which, with its apology of instinct and of *l'élan vital* (the life urge) had led to the crudest esthetic revaluations. Indeed an influence blown over from Africa swept over the Parisian mind with a savage-intellectual frenzy that was enough to make one weep. People adored the lamentable instinctive products of real savages! Negro art had just been enthroned, and this was accomplished with the aid of Picasso and the surrealists! When I reflected that the heirs of the intelligence of a Raphael Sanzio had fallen into such an aberration, I blushed with shame and rage. I had to find the antidote, the banner with which to challenge these blind and immediate products of fear, of absence of intelligence and of spiritual enslavement; and against the African "savage objects" I upheld the ultra-decadent, civilised and European "Modern Style" objects. I have always considered the 1900 period as the psycho-pathological end-product of the Greco-Roman decadence. I said to myself: since these people will not hear of esthetics and are capable of becoming excited only over "vital agitations," I shall show them how in the tiniest ornamental detail of an object of 1900 there is more mystery, more poetry, more eroticism, more madness, perversity, torment, pathos, grandeur and biological depth than in their innumerable stock of truculently ugly fetishes possessing bodies and souls of a stupidity that is simply and uniquely savage!

The unfortunate result is not of madness, eroticism, the uniquely savage, but of sadness.

"When I look at a classical picture," Dali quotes Freud as saying to him, "I look for the unconscious. When I look at a surrealist picture I look for the conscious." The dull trance of the *voulu* afflicts Dali's account of his fantasy life. Madrid and Paris corrupted this provincial bounder; who was clever and sedulous enough—he is as sharp as a shopkeeper—to exploit the boredom of the rich and snob enough to enjoy their company just because they were rich. Spanish barbarism sorted well with the corruption of pre-war Europe. It is noticeable that he is much more interesting and modest about his methods of work and about his life, when he is living in his beautiful Catalonia fishing town. There his fantasies are milder. Some arise from the structure of the landscape; others are well-known "dissolves" made by the eye: a rabbit's head that becomes the eye of a parrot, itself enclosed by the eye of a fish. When he was rowing he would see multitudes of parasoles. Even the rages of Narcissism become sentimental here—the Barrie touch—and betray the trite interests of the mild art student.

The violent and fanatical individuality and egotism of Spaniards has often been observed; theirs is an individuality which puts no intervening shock-cushion between itself and the universe. Only religious ferocity has been able to impose an order upon it, or the solitary tedium of mysticism; its anti-sociality is endemic. It would be too flattering to Dali to regard him as more than a commercial traveller in this psychological commodity, a kind of wise guy trotting out samples of his adolescence. The Catalonia of his boyhood after the first world war, had become packed with nouveaux riches; in its own way, the province was as rotten as Hollywood. When a business man amused himself by covering a couple of horses with glue, at a local fiesta, and then rolling them in confetti, until they died, we are not startled at Dali's dead donkeys on a grand piano. Even Baron Münchausen, a civilised liar, would, we feel sure, have yawned before the egomania of the new dispensation and complain (as he did before) that in improving on his stories, his plagiarists have destroyed their innocence.

V. S. Pritchett

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* *The Secret Life of Salvador Dali. Vision Press.* 42s.

PHILOSOPHER OR PROPHET?

Human Knowledge: Its Scope and Limits. By BERTRAND RUSSELL. *Allen & Unwin.* 18*s*.

Bertrand Russell continues to amaze us. Not content with the position he established among mathematicians and philosophers by his early work on mathematical logic; nor with his subsequent success as a biographer, historian, essayist, political scientist and pamphleteer; nor even with his world-wide reputation as a contemporary prophet, the result of half a century's voyages in mind and space, into distant countries and remote subjects; with all this behind him, and at an age when it would have been natural and understandable to choose to withdraw from the arena, he has begun once again to publish major works of technical philosophy.

The results, it must be admitted, are disappointing. Reading this, his latest work, and applying to it those critical standards which he (along with G. E. Moore) did so much to create, one cannot help feeling that he has lost his old touch, and that his width of experience and interests have cost him something both in depth and in delicacy of treatment.

The book may best be described as a "compendium" of his philosophical opinions—opinions bearing on everything from the nebulæ to nervous conduction, and from logic and language to perception and probability. It cannot be said to put forward a "metaphysical system," for Russell has none of the urge for consistency and coherence characteristic of (for example) Spinoza:

> The prophet announced that if two texts of the Koran appeared inconsistent, the later text was to be taken as authoritative, and I should wish the reader to apply a similar principle in interpreting what is said in this book.

Many of the doctrines it propounds are, nevertheless, metaphysical in one respect: it is extremely difficult to decide how they are to be interpreted, what kind of evidence should be demanded in support of them, and how they would be related to any evidence advanced. This difficulty, as so often in philosophy, is obscured by the eccentricity of the vocabulary:

> Every belief which is not merely an impulse to action is in the nature of a picture, combined with a yes-feeling or a no-feeling.

—a deceptively lucid-looking remark in terms of which he sets out to *define* "truth" and "falsehood."

I do not think that Russell's claim to be addressing, not only or primarily professional philosophers but also the general philosophically minded public, can be allowed to explain away the many obscurities in the book. When necessary, indeed, he is quite prepared to abandon the general reader, whose persistence will be tried beyond its limit by the highly detailed treatment of mathematical probability. It would surely have been better had he cast his net less widely and maintained that level of clarity and care which he still showed in his *Inquiry into Meaning and Truth.* His argument that all the parts of his subject are inextricably interconnected seems to me only a confession of failure: I cannot believe that it is impossible to discuss "propositions" without bringing in Protagoras, protons, "prototypes" and psychoanalysis as well!

The main subject of the work—in so far as it has a single main subject—is one about which he has often said puzzling things. There is, he tells us, something deficient in all scientific inferences and arguments. Admittedly that the techniques which we call "scientific" are those which, in any field of study, we have found most reliable as a means of bringing our past and present experience to bear upon our expectations for the future; admittedly that, when any particular technique or theory begins to fail us, we search for a more reliable, more "scientific" substitute in favour of which we can discard it, admittedly that many of these techniques and theories have come to be knit together in such a way that a predictive failure in one field of study has repercussions in other, distant fields, and that, to be accepted, a theory must pass the most rigorous battery of tests. Yet in spite of all arguments of this nature, science remains for him radically suspect. This kind of test cannot, to his way of thinking, be in the last resort satisfactory: "Scientific inference requires, for its validity, principles which experience cannot render even probable," and this he seems ready to maintain even if we understand him as including in "experience" not only "sense-experiences," but also that practical experience which provides particular scientific theories with their actual tests.

The position he defends here reminds us of other arguments of his which we have read before. In his brilliant little survey of *The Problems of Philosophy,* he made similar complaints about scientific method: "The man who has fed the chicken every day throughout its life at last wrings its neck instead, showing that more refined ideas as to the uniformity of nature would have been useful to the chicken." But even here we feel the same discomfort: surely the trouble with the chicken (as John Wisdom has pointed out) lies less in its metaphysical beliefs than in the narrowness of its experience, and in its failure to observe more carefully and draw appropriate conclusions from the fates of its brothers? Again, in *The Principles of Mathematics,* we find an aside in which he suggests that, in so far as scientists use anything but strict deduction, their inferences rely on "a mere method of making plausible guesses." And now, for the third time, he returns to the assault: "if I am ever to be able to infer events," he argues, "I must accept principles of inference which lie outside deductive logic"—principles which may not themselves be checked as we go along. But commonsense once again revolts. It is not a "commonplace," as he would have us believe, "that the substantial inferences of science, as opposed to those of logic and mathematics, are only *probable,*" that the conclusions of a scientific discussion can never be more than "*likely* to be true": this remains a paradox, however much he may feel that "what he tells us three times is true." Nevertheless, while being a paradox, it is a revealing paradox, for the disparaging comparison it makes between science and deductive methods of argument helps us to guess at the reasons behind his complaints. What is wrong with science in his eyes, it seems, is that it is a method of inference "from a group of events to other events" at all, that it does not content itself with deductive transformations of its axioms and premises, that it rejects hypotheses on other grounds than those which deductive logic would advise; in fact, that science *is* science, and not mathematics.

Science is not mathematics or deductive logic, but it is none the worse for that. A man may need more than proficiency in deductive logic and mathematics in order to become a good scientist; but this fact is surely no ground for invoking "principles which experience cannot render even probable" to account for his success. It is at best a reminder that, for all the use it makes of deductive methods of argument, the activity of the scientist is distinct from that of the mathematician. To one with a natural aptitude for mathematics, and an initial training in the subject, one who has become as familiar as Russell with the "calculus of probability" and the "method of mathematical induction," it may seem worthwhile to try to account in mathematical terms for the everyday uses of the notion of "probability" and for those scientific techniques which (misleadingly) are also often known as "induction." But the perennial desire shown by mathematically minded philosophers to recast scientific arguments in a form in which every step carries a deductive guarantee can lead to nothing but a caricature of science. In approaching science, a flair for mathematics may be a good servant, but it can make a bad master. To talk about scientific discovery, even in a work of philosophy, in the same terms as mathematical discovery is not only to adopt an approach which is bound, like Laplace's, to be "unsuccessful," it is to misconceive the nature of the subject. As one battles through *Human Knowledge* one cannot help wondering whether, for all the range, power and speed of his intellect, this is not what Russell does.

Speculation, imagination, a mind rich in experience, fruitful of hypotheses, and confined to no philosophical tramlines—throughout the history of science, it is these which have paid dividends in the form of discoveries. These are the gifts which mark off the Darwins, Faradays, Mendels and Rutherfords of the world; yet they seem to the philosopher who is preoccupied with mathematics and deductive logic to be only refinements of animal instinct, mere methods of making plausible guesses. In a strange, half-convinced way, Russell recognises the paradoxes involved in this view and the irrelevance of the mathematical criteria of "validity"; but the lengths to which he feels bound to go, in order to bridge the gap between scientific inference as it is and as he would like it to be, show that he, too, like the philosophers whose "perplexities" he criticises, is led astray by the memory of, if not by unwillingness to awaken from, the "blissful dream" of nineteenth-century rationalism—the dream of a future guaranteed by calculation and "ultimately" free from risks.

It is possible to discuss here only the main issues raised by this book and, even so, the objections advanced might seem to Russell himself to be off the point. But so also, for that matter, must his and Moore's own criticisms have appeared to their victims. The facts to which Moore pointed, for example, in refutation of Bradley's "proof" that Time is Unreal would have seemed to the author of the doctrine as irrelevant as the naive response, "Oh, then it's no good trying to catch the 3.45 to London."

These are indeed the same perversely common sensical pins with which Russell has always enjoyed puncturing Hegel's proud, gas-filled balloons. The pity of it is that he should have given us the chance to turn them upon him Perhaps he has grown too fond of paradox. The speed of mind and sense of publicity which make him a pillar of the Brains Trust have certainly taught him its value in the service of irony:

> If the practically unlimited supply of hydrogen in the sea could be utilised [in atomic weapons] there would be considerable reason to hope that *homo sapiens* might put an end to himself, to the great advantage of the other less ferocious animals.

In so doing, however, they seem at last to have robbed him of that acute sense of literal truth which is the philosopher's most precious possession. It would be sad if the very gifts which have given him his reputation as a prophet should prove in the long run to have betrayed him as a philosopher.

STEPHEN TOULMIN

SANCTA SIMPLICITAS

The Cowden Clarkes. By RICHARD D. ALTICK *Oxford University Press.* 18*s*.

It would be foolish to deny that the Cowden Clarkes sound perfectly tedious. In the first place, they are so unknown. The name *ought* to ring a bell; indeed one must have heard of Charles Cowden Clarke—the "early friend" of Keats, the young schoolmaster who made him a poet. Clarke, by this good deed, secured a marginal immortality, but it does not follow that one wants to read all about him: still less about his wife, who is completely extinct. As the "loving author-couple," twin, tiny satellites reflecting Leigh Hunt as their sun, and writing on and on, with complacent industry, to the verge of ninety years apiece, they put one off even more. In fact they sound like dimness personified—just the kind of couple to be dug up for research in these latter days, *faute de mieux*.

For two or three chapters of this American biography, the outlook scarcely improves. Young Charles Clarke, bald, bouncing and enthusiastic in his late twenties, first met his future bride at a picnic on Hampstead Heath. It was a Hunt-Novello picnic, dreadfully typical: quips and Shakespeare-worship and intense jollity, blended in the lap of nature. That was how the Hunts and the Novellos lived together—as in the golden age; and Charles Clarke, though perhaps the humblest, was loudest of all. (Later, his friends were sure he must be the original of Lawrence Boythorn.) On that day he formed no designs on his future wife, who was Mary Victoria Novello, aged seven; but she was, to use the language of Dick Swiveller, saving up for him—growing into a woman expressly on his account. She grew up small, plain and unattractive, but at the earliest becoming moment, when she was sixteen, he fell in love with her. And, why not? By then, the large and gifted Novello family had adopted him; he shared all their views and feelings, and Mary was the eldest girl. He chose her inevitably.

The union was perpetual bliss. So they both declared, and there seems no evidence against it. "Among the literary couples of the age," says Professor Altick, "not even the Brownings felt a tithe of the innocent ecstasy which permeated every waking hour of the Cowden Clarkes' unending honeymoon." They were ecstatic on principle: a principle derived, like so much else of theirs, from Leigh Hunt, the patron saint of both. From childhood Mary had regarded him "with idolatry," while Charles, at first sight, "fell as pronely in love with him as any girl in her teens with her first-seen Romeo." And being a loyal pair, they never changed; it was not their habit, or indeed the habit of their circle, to see through anyone:

> Self-effacement, effusive cordiality, generosity, unremitting enthusiasm about everyone else, these were the qualities which marked the group. Into their social sphere the unpleasant, the malevolent, never penetrated; so far as they were aware, the world was populated exclusively by swans.

The Cowden Clarkes maintained this tradition to the last, and their *Recollections of Writers* (1878), enshrining every celebrity or near-celebrity they had ever met, amused the critics by its uniform rose-colour. "If," said *Notes and Queries*, "Mr. and Mrs. Clarke had flourished during the millenium, they could not have found the world more wholly free from guile"; and Edmund Gosse professed himself stimulated "to put roses round that crook, our pen, and wander away with a few sheep in the train of all these beautiful and innocent persons." Hardly anyone below the rank of angel seemed to have crossed their path; yet they had a huge acquaintance, and were, in theory, the nicest of Victorian moralists. But then they knew where to stop. In a work of art or a fictitious character, no least shade of indecorum escaped their eye; but in real people whom they wished to like, they could see nothing irregular. The gift was often strained, but always came through. "From their account of Shelley, for example, one would never suspect that there had ever been a Harriet."

It is hard to say just when this insipid guilelessness, this want of malice and discrimination becomes enjoyable. But it does; it comes to strike one as a joke, and also a feat. For after all, they managed to keep it up; they remained sublimely happy in their aesthetic pastoral, their "refined and beautiful ideas," their "loving, literary consociation."

And though enraptured sycophants of genius, they had their public and their own little crop of laurels. Not lasting, but deserved. One need not doubt that Charles Clarke, in twenty-one years of lecturing, set many people up and down the country reading the poets; it was just what he had done for Keats at his father's school. He also wrote pretty hard, on a fair variety of subjects; but his achievement is eclipsed by that of his wife—the kind of mousey little woman whose audacities take one's breath away. Mary Clarke would try her hand at anything, and never looked back. A year after her marriage, someone happened to remark at the breakfast table that there was no concordance to "the Bible of the Intellectual World," Shakespeare's plays. Mary "resolved there and then that *I* would write this desired Concordance," and set to work "that very forenoon." At that time she knew nothing of Shakespeare scholarship, or what she had taken on; but she toiled away for sixteen years, and emerged in triumph.

That was her grand service to the Bard; later she produced, with Charles's help, two editions of him, as well as other tributes innumerable. The Cowden Clarkes were not Shakespeare critics, they were fundamentalists. They took it as an axiom that "every line from his magic pen . . . showed the same unbelievable insight into human character, the same serene wisdom, the same transcendent artistry": that every word was an elucidation of the moral law. Yet he was not at all intimidating, merely one of themselves—a "thoroughly agreeable nineteenth-century gentleman," with the extra charm of being divine. "Angel William" hung on guard over Mary's bed: the first face, "together with my mother's, which hangs close by him," to greet her waking eyes. "We don't say Mr. Shakespeare, but—darling Willie, dear William, beloved Will."

Sometimes one can hardly believe that she had read "darling Willie," let alone pored on him for sixteen years. Yet Mary Clarke was no fool. To take an instance—her fictitious *Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines*, once so popular, may have been a rash attempt and could not be less Shakespearean, but its domestic psychology is far from bad. On the other hand, it seems plain enough that she had no judgment. Professor Altick quotes a few of the poems which she assembled, at a ripe age, in *Honey from the Weed*. Here is a narrative sequence:

So, while her gnomes wrought out her mandates with
Precision equal to her own in all
She ordered, Grace was taken down to the
Seaside by careful Mistress Wilson, that
She might recover perfectly before
The mansion was arranged according to
Her wish.

The other passages are equally brilliant, and they send one straight to the collection; one feels so sure they have been quoted wrong, or picked out with care. But no, it is the same throughout: pancake flatness—and appalling fluency. She wrote books for old and young, every kind of book, always fluently; for she had no judgment.

One may add, luckily for her. That was the secret of the Clarkes' lifelong happiness; instead of judging, they enjoyed. And if they caught this from Leigh Hunt, they were right to venerate him.

Professor Altick has a scholar's thoroughness; his big book is full of matter—but he sees all the fun. The presentiment of tedium was quite baseless.

K. John

THE REVOLUTION OF THE INTELLECTUALS

The Opening of an Era: 1848. Edited by François Fetjö, with an introduction by A. J. P. Taylor. *Wingate*. 21s.

Of the different symposia evoked by the centenary of 1848 in this country, the present volume is by far the best. It is comprehensive; even Spain and the United States are included. It is given coherence by an admirable introduction by Mr. A. J. P. Taylor, and a general survey by the editor, Mr. Fetjö. Though, naturally enough, the essays are of unequal merit, some of them are of exceptional value; those on France, by the eminent French historian, M. Bourgin, on Italy by Signor Cantimori, and on Hungary by the editor, are of high interest backed by solid scholarship. On the other hand, the essays on Great Britain, Poland, and Austria are disappointing, especially in the light of the windows opened some years ago by the remarkable Raleigh lecture to the British Academy which Professor Namier called "The Revolution of the Intellectuals." There is, perhaps, too great a tendency in most of the essays to stress the political, as opposed to the economic and intellectual factors; and some of the major problems, the failure of French foreign policy, for example, and the pathetic futility of the Chartist leaders, are hardly faced. But the editor has managed to get together a symposium in which the reader is kept continuously interested, and there is no slavish devotion to any special ideology into whose formal frame every event has somehow to be forced. All in all, this is a sound workmanlike job.

What emerges most interestingly from the book is a series of lessons we have still to learn with any fullness. There is the immense power, still far from exhausted, of nationalism. There is the bitter hostility of a recently risen middle class to the claims of the proletariat by whose help it has been liberated. There is the ease with which a revolution against something can be made, and the difficulty with which a revolutionary alliance can be held together after the phase of destruction has been completed. It is clear that it is always difficult to move to the revolutionary act so long as the army's loyalty remains unbroken; and it is also clear that, in general, the making of an effective revolution is a young man's job, even though it may require men of greater maturity to complete it. Kropotkin's profound aphorism remains unshaken that a revolution which is to succeed must begin by the swift amendment of the more bitter grievance; as Lenin's remains true that a group making a revolution must always be on the offensive, and able, every day, to report some gain, however small. It is, moreover, not less obvious that a revolution itself shapes a counter-revolution, and that the failure to prepare against that counter-revolution makes those who have newly won power incapable of the integration which is necessary to preserve it. Nor can a book such as this help making one feel afresh how large in our modern societies are the *déclassés*, the adventurers who have, as it were, expelled themselves from the categories of any historic social structure, and are ready to sell themselves to any leader who seems to have a chance of victory. That was as true of France in 1848 as it is true of Germany to-day; and no serious student will fail to remark that the number of such dubious adventurers in both Great Britain and the United States is perhaps larger to-day than it was a century ago.

Perhaps few things in modern history are more tragic than the disillusion which followed on the failure of 1848. Mr. Taylor closes his impressive introduction with the remark that "1848 left no tradition in either America or Russia. . . . For Russia it brought a victorious repression of revolution in Hungary. For America it marked the discovery of gold in California. To the present day, the one Great Power offers Europe repression, the other material wealth. Neither can offer the liberty of spirit which was the true aim of 1848." I venture to think that Mr. Taylor has here sacrificed the complexity of truth to the attractiveness of a brilliant aphorism. The election of President Truman, coming after the remarkable epoch which Franklin Roosevelt symbolised, may well represent the first large-scale challenge to the power of corporate wealth in America since the end of the Civil War; and the chances of that challenge being successful will largely depend upon the wisdom of European action in the next few years. That European action, no doubt, includes the enigma of Russian purposes; and if these are an unchanging determination to undermine the foundations of political democracy in Western Europe, that liberty of the spirit which still lives in the heart of America may be completely destroyed. But I think it is still premature to make final conclusions about Russian purposes. Nor is it irrelevant to insist that the Germany of the next ten years will also play a vital part. Its conquerors do not seem as yet to have realised the scale of the tragedy which was enacted when the German revolutionaries failed. Since 1848, except for a week or two, counter-revolution has been continuously in power in Germany; and it is still uncertain whether the Anglo-American victory is going to mean a new Germany in which democratic institutions are given real meaning, or a new Germany made strong to fulfil the counter-revolutionary dream of a broken Soviet Russia. I agree wholeheartedly with Mr. Taylor that we need, as never before, the liberty of the spirit which was the supreme inspiration of the men of 1848. But we ought to recognise that we shall not secure that liberty unless we can neutralise the determination of property to break the world rather than to lose its privileges. We do not move towards that end by a halt on our road to socialism in Europe

HAROLD J. LASKI

TIME OFF

Full Enjoyment. By NORMAN CROSBY. *Nicholson and Watson.* 6*s*.

Sometimes in the sad count-up of small change left in the pay-packet after the weekly wolves have called, it seems that most or all the gains Labour has made during the last fifty years are illusory, dubious or debatable. In fact, they all get challenged somewhere or other, all save one. Nobody denies that the worker has more spare time than his grandfather had, more of the day is his own. Agreed. But unfortunately, Mr. Crosby calls this spare time, leisure, thus putting the proposition back into the ring again. For very often the old-time working-man had a great deal of leisure when he was at work. There were no feed-and-speed experts then to divide the anxious minutes between the fragmentary operations of a mass-production process. His job was more all of a piece, and very likely he had a lot of say in how it was run. He could keep his own tempo and send the boy out for a jug of beer if so disposed. He *lived* more on the job. But undoubtedly it took up nearly all his day, and compared with him we have a wealth of spare time to fling about. What do we do with it?

Full Enjoyment traces the squandering of our free half-hours in a text just a little too reminiscent of the committee report to fulfil the promise of the title though the record is complete enough, well illustrated in photographs and supported by isotype charts, and the conclusions are sound. It immediately appears that we while away the bulk of our golden hours in standing or sitting around at cinemas, pubs, sport-spectacles:

> The first major characteristic of these predominant uses of our leisure time is their passive nature. They call for little or no physical, mental or creative effort. . . . And since these things are attractive and easy it has been profitable to cater for them.

Because passive pleasures are catered for so abundantly, we go down on record as being vastly fond of them. Private enterprise builds us cinemas and sports stadiums in the belief that we'll want them and the knowledge that if we want them there is a speedy return on the capital invested. If we want playing-pitches and theatres for amateurs, however, which yield no ready gain at all, we must await the slow endeavours of Governmental departments aided and urged by bands of enthusiasts. In London alone, there must be at least a hundred thousand people who can't get a game of football or cricket on Saturday afternoon owing to pitch-shortage. Well, while they are waiting for the impossible acreage they need, they go to the pictures or watch Arsenal.

The supply of the means of doing dictates what we want to do very often, and until the supply is made nobody can be quite certain what our demands might be. Mr. Crosby reports, for instance, that when a new Sunday social club for young people was opened in Glasgow, police flying squads had to be called out to control a crowd of 10,000 youths and girls seeking admission. Most observers in this field would agree that the need for all kinds of community centres is great and could grow very great. So far, only Mr. Butlin has used the commercial possibilities of it; and Government departments, though apt to aid, are not yet free to build. When they are, the community centre might easily become a recognised British Institution, queening it in among the isotypes of some future survey of the worker's playtime. Even then, some caviller is bound to ask " Are they happy in their work? " The answer to that question is, at all times, the clue to how they play.

JACK COMMON

THE SPOILED PRIEST

Kevin O'Higgins. By TERENCE DE VERE WHITE. *Methuen.* 18*s*.

Ireland in 1922 was rather like what I fancy Palestine is today. A nationalist movement, using terrorist methods, had succeeded, and was discovering that assassination can never be " the trial and the endal, heard but here upon this bank and stool of time " (or whatever words to that effect Shakespeare may have used): there are also the " bloody instructions which, being taught, return to plague the inventor." In the Irish government of the day there were two men of outstanding ability with very different attitudes towards this: Michael Collins and Kevin O'Higgins. " For Jasus' sake," Collins had said to General Mulcahy when he complained of yet another general arriving at his headquarters, " let the bloody baby have his shtripes." Collins felt that at any cost civil war must be avoided. O'Higgins believed it was essential. " You're mad," Collins shouted. " Ye're all mad. Ye don't know what ye're doing." " Mick," said Kevin O'Higgins, " if I had half your brains I'd take this country by the scruff of the neck and box its ears." Collins' death gave him his chance.

His passion for boxing people's ears is explicable by his background. " The spoiled priest " is a familiar type in Irish life, and needs a Mauriac to explore its extraordinary psychology. Expelled from two ecclesiastical seminaries because of his violence O'Higgins seemed as if he were going to turn into a drunken waster. The ideal being impossible, any other career was anti-climax. The revolution provided him with a substitute vocation. He made no mistakes in this career. He gave up drinking. He fasted for six months before his marriage. He devoted himself heart and soul to the business of boxing the Irish people's ears, for which the brutal murder of his father provided an additional incentive. Erskine Childers, an Englishman of great nobility and sincerity, who had been serving Ireland before O'Higgins was heard of, he hounded to his death. Even Mr. White is compelled to protest against his " distortion " of Childers' character, " steadily, callously, ghoulishly . . . striking at the heart of this nation, striking deadly, or what he hopes are deadly, blows at the economic life of the nation." Childers was executed on a charge of carrying arms (though these, one might add, were merely a miniature revolver presented to him by Michael Collins, which the sentimental Englishman wore pinned to his braces over the heart.) Incidentally, Mr. White's own statement that Childers was in charge of Republican propaganda is wrong, and I doubt if Childers ever took part in any actual fighting.

Then came the murder of a Government deputy, and the government, on the advice of the Army Council, executed in reprisal four Republican prisoners of war. One, Rory O'Connor, was O'Higgins' best friend and a short time before had been best man at his wedding. " Personal spite, great heavens! " Higgins exclaimed as he broke down in parliament. " Vindictiveness! One of these men was a friend of mine."

These are the two blackest spots on O'Higgins' record. In his favour, he also fought threats from within his own party. The government forces were split into two groups. In the so-called " Army Mutiny " one side issued an ultimatum to the government, which the other side, ignoring the government, proceeded to deal with in its own way. O'Higgins succeeded in breaking up both groups. He also fought hard to control

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JOHN MURRAY

the murder gangs in his own camp, though with less success. This is scarcely surprising, as his chief of police, an equally pious man who later led an Irish Fascist force in Spain, was himself consulting Jesuit theologians as to the morality of murdering prisoners.

O'Higgins had a scheme for bringing George V to Ireland and having him crowned there, but in 1927 he was murdered on his way to Mass. He is commemorated in Yeat's lines

> A great man in his pride
> Confronting murderous men
> Casts derision upon
> Supersession of breath.

Mr. White has told his story lucidly, sympathetically and fairly. It has been of enormous help to him that he owed no loyalty to any party and could criticise freely. I think he confounds democracy and majority rule in his attempt to show that O'Higgins was not Fascist in sympathy. The two are not identical, and the Act which deprived Protestants of the right of divorce is Fascist legislation. There was a real element of violence in O'Higgins' character, and his outburst against Childers sets the key for his attacks on everyone who disagreed with him, and the hectoring, schoolmaster tone which his colleagues took over from him and which finally caused their political downfall is intolerable. Several times I found myself moaning " For Jasus' sake, let the bloody baby have his shtripes ! "

Sometimes even Mr. White lets himself be taken in by it. He quotes O'Higgins' reading of a letter from Galway Gaol dated the " 7th year of the Republic " and beginning " Dear Billy, All that I am thinking of is where to get guns when we get out, because I want to talk to some Bank Managers and a few railway clerks," but Mr. White as a lawyer is naturally of a trusting disposition. My training as a realistic writer leads me to suspect every document in which the relevant sentence is the opening one. He also says that " a form of ambush had grown to be common in which parties of Free State soldiers were fired upon and when they were about to respond the attackers would surrender." Who these unknown heroes were he does not specify, but if any survived I should like to shake them by the hand. Their faith in human nature was certainly creditable.

The truth is that, as a result of continuous strain, almost everyone connected with the revolutionary movement was slightly mad, and O'Higgins, who towered over everybody after Collins, was madder than most. His scheme for the crowning of George V in Ireland was sheer lunacy, and that he should ever have been allowed to entertain it shows how completely out of touch with popular feeling his colleagues were. The survivors have mended their hand considerably since then.

FRANK O'CONNOR

WEYGAND

The Role of General Weygand. Conversations with his son. By COMMANDANT J. WEYGAND. *Eyre & Spottiswoode. 12s. 6d.*

This book is as cold and stiff as a corpse. In the long row of memoirs devoted by French generals and politicians to the story of their downfall in 1940, this important account which could have done much to lay the foundations for a new understanding between British and French staffs, stands in chilly solitude, tight-lipped, monosyllabic, almost deliberately and offensively unpersuasive. Its wooden and graceless style has been translated into absurd Whitehallese.

Yet, in these artifically arranged conversations with his son, the former Commander-in-Chief of the allied armies in France is desperately anxious to state his case and state it convincingly. The forgers of new Franco-British alliances, designed to hold where the old ones broke, could do worse than study this curt, gruff, and unfriendly statement which strangely enough, as one progresses, communicates a peculiar charm of its own, especially where it persuades least. " I am, above all anxious," writes Weygand, " to establish the fact that in all my actions loyalty was my guide." In following this theme one finds that the St. Cyr conception of " loyalty " which underlies the generalissimo's entire defence, differs little from its Sandhurst counterpart, and that it is their common limitations which prevent the two from being wedded into something at once sufficiently firm and elastic to outlast the hour of supreme crisis. Weygand's conclusion that " lasting and solid friendship between two great nations can never be based upon falsehood, but must rest on complete sincerity and the fullest possible understanding alone," is unfortunately mere rhetoric. It does not solve the problem but merely states it. Alliances are bounded by the limitations of those who conclude them, and generals, as this example shows, find it particularly hard to jump ahead of their shadows.

There is no doubt that the rift between Britain and France after May, 1940, grieved Weygand deeply and genuinely. We may believe him when he asserts that he arrived too late on the scene to be able to repair the basic damage, just as we have no reason to doubt his angry claim that there never was such a thing as a conspiracy between him and Pétain and that from the moment he entered the Pétain government for pure motives of " loyalty," he was in fact already on his way out of it. But one does remain appalled, once again, by the revelation of the seemingly unending chain of muddles, misunderstandings, and incidents of mistrust and non-co-ordination, with one or two monumental errors of judgment and more than one outrageously naive idea thrown in by both parties. And allowing for a pardonable wisdom after the event, there remain points in this account of the Battle of France and the Armistice with which British readers will instinctively disagree, and some which they will never swallow, however massively they are proved. It seems hardly possible to maintain, for instance, that had the full strength of the R.A.F. been transferred to France in June, 1940, it would have saved that country, while insisting at the same time, although admittedly somewhat half-heartedly, that British worries about the French Fleet were unreasonable since it was quite safe in the hands of Vichy.

There are other points of more than purely historical interest on which obviously a second opinion must be obtained before judgment can be formed. The highly intriguing incident of the telegrams sent by Lord Halifax to M. Reynaud on June 16th, 1940 and snatched back by Sir Ronald Campbell, only to be returned to the French after the instructions they contained had been superseded by events, may find its clarification in the second volume of Mr. Churchill's memoirs which will cover this period. Similarly General Weygand's account of Mers-el-Kebir cannot be accepted as valid until it can be compared with Mr. Churchill's version.

Weygand's apologia for the separate armistice, finally, is weak and contradictory. Having instructed Gen. Huntzinger of the modifications of the German terms on which he must insist and without which he would not sign but rather go down fighting—they referred chiefly to the Fleet and the handing over of the German refugees in France—Weygand, a few hours later when Hitler has said " No," forgets all about them and signs with a regretful shrug. The " formal German undertaking " that the clause referring to the German refugees " would apply only to German subjects who had been responsible for instigating measures which had led to war," was found to be satisfactory after it had been, five minutes

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earlier, "contrary to every canon of humanity." With mixed feelings one reads:—

> So it was that in the end I had my way. But at what a price! I had had to outrage my own most intimate feelings, to withstand the temptation to save my own reputation by compromising with what I knew to be my duty, and to accomplish in agony of soul that which I firmly believed to be in the best interests of my country!

Loyalty again! By the time one has reached the last page of this icily self-satisfied account and looks at the map of Western Europe, one is truly terrified of the word, knowing that one has by no means heard it for the last time.

PETER DE MENDELSSOHN

WAXWORK

Maria Marten. By J. C. CURTIS. Edited by JEANNE and NORMAN MACKENZIE. *Pilot Press.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

This is the story of the famous murder in the Red Barn at Polstead, Suffolk, in 1827, as told by a contributor to *The Times* who hurried to the spot. It is rather different from the version of popular melodrama which pictures Maria as an innocent village maid and William Corder, her murderer, as a lustful aristocrat. Once again real life proves to be more complicated, more equivocal, and much less tidy than the neat parcel which professional story-tellers like to make of it. The facts are that Maria, though no doubt a charming, gentle creature, had been seduced at least twice before William Corder, a local yeoman farmer's son, came on the scene, her first seducer being William's elder brother, Thomas.

It is a little difficult to see why the case attracted quite such an enormous amount of attention, so that *The Times* for several days devoted over a quarter of its total space to Curtis's reports. There was no particular mystery about it, never any doubt about Corder's guilt. By twentieth-century standards it has two interesting features. One is the letters which Corder wrote to Maria's father from the Isle of Wight, giving him the impression that Maria was alive and with him when, in fact, she was a corpse under the floor of the Red Barn, and he was already married to a Miss Moore whom he had met through a matrimonial advertisement. In the end these letters only helped to make the wretched Corder's guilt more shatteringly obvious. The first question he was asked by his wife's brother who visited him after his arrest, and was originally disposed to believe him innocent, was: "How could you send letters that you were living happily with Maria Marten when, at the same time, you were living with my sister whom you had married?" The other singularity is, of course, the persistent dream of Maria's stepmother that Maria had been murdered and buried in the Red Barn, but for which the body might never have been discovered. Perhaps it was this, coupled with the exhumation of Maria's corpse, described in elaborately ghoulish detail by Curtis, which helped to catch the prevailing Gothick vogue and, reinforced by the element of class-war introduced by the melodramatists, turn the Red Barn into a prototype of murders for some time to come.

James Curtis, whom Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie have now rescued from oblivion, had one of the most unctuously pompous styles in the history of journalism, a style beyond parody or burlesque. Here he is setting out:

> I left London on St. Swithin's Day, when, in order to keep up the old legend which records her fame she bedewed me and my fellow passengers plentifully with tears . . .

On arrival he "could not help exclaiming 'Is it possible that in the midst of this little Eden, a village swain has imbrued his hands in the blood of his damsel?'."

This is up to Players Theatre form. Moreover, his sense of chronology is so shaky that the Mackenzies have had to put his story in order for him. Nevertheless, when he forgets to sermonise he is a good reporter with an eye for the significant detail and an ear for living speech. Mixed in with his torrent of pious clichés are plenty of vivid descriptive flashes, including one of the execution and an interview afterwards with the hangman who was rumoured to have sold the rope to a Cambridge museum: "What I got, I got, and that's all I shall say except that that was a very good rope." As a contemporary chronicler he is well worth reading though his unctuous hypocrisy is inclined to make one suspect his accuracy. As the Mackenzies point out in their interesting epilogue, which would have been better printed as an introduction, the original copy of Curtis's book was bound in the skin of William Corder. True, the skinning was done after death, but one does rather wonder whether the Bury prison officials who did this ghoulish act deserved the fulsome eulogies which Curtis bestowed on them for their "humanity and decency."

MAURICE RICHARDSON

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Bird Recognition. Vol. I. By JAMES FISHER. *Penguin Books.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

British Sea Birds. By C. A. GIBSON-HILL. *Witherby.* 18*s.*

Bird Recognition is an ambitious and timely project. The obvious first need of every bird-watcher is a comprehensive and detailed account of the appearance and behaviour of each sort of bird, with accurate illustrations, at a reasonable price; and one would expect there to be many such books. In point of fact there are only two: both are unobtainable and have been so for a long time. For that reason alone it is to be hoped Mr. Fisher will give us as quickly as possible the two remaining volumes on Gamebirds, Birds of Prey and Waterfowl, and on Singing and Perching Birds. Meanwhile "Sea-Birds and Waders" is a sample of the whole—and very encouraging it is. The text is concise, practical and to the point. For each species there is a map illustrating breeding and distribution ranges and a chart which indicates seasonal movements. "Fish-Hawk's" illustrations are unpretentious and adequate, though they suffer inevitably from not being in colour, and thus underline one's feeling that this should be described as a cheap edition of an unpublished classic. We hope the usual order will be reversed and *Bird Recognition* will eventually run to a not-so-cheap edition, with coloured plates and a more durable format. Meanwhile it will immediately establish itself as the "poor man's bible" of bird-watching. *British Sea Birds* is a magnificent supplement to Mr. Fisher's pocket guide-book. Mr. Gibson-Hill writes gracefully and with distinction, but it is his photographs which make the book so unquestionably outstanding. The portraits of puffin and razorbill, the studies of flying gannets and the view from above of a gliding fulmar are brilliant examples of camera-work. The book is a pleasure to handle, a delight to read, and above all an enchantment to look at.

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Company Meetings

LLOYDS BANK LIMITED

SOME NATIONAL PROGRESS

The annual meeting of Lloyds Bank Limited will be held on February 11th at the Head Office, London.

The following is an extract from the statement circulated by the chairman, the Right Hon. Lord Balfour of Burleigh, D.L., with the report and accounts:

Our profit at £1,674,329 is slightly higher than last year. While our resources and our advances have increased during the year there have been considerable increases in our staff costs and running expenses. Our current, deposit and other accounts at £1,123 million have increased by £52 million. It was anticipated that with the declared deflationary policy and the expected budgetary surplus the expansion in banking resources would have been arrested, but the increase has been substantially the same as that experienced in the previous year. The outstanding change in our assets is the large increase in loans and advances, which at £226 million show an increase of £34 million.

So long as the flow of Marshall dollars continues the crisis in the balance of payments is postponed. This is in itself a measure of the improvement in the outlook over the year.

Unfortunately one cannot yet affirm with any confidence that we are on the sure road to national independence, much less to prosperity. Only temporary relief can at best be afforded by gifts.

However great our own exertions, our payments difficulties will not be solved without a great revival of international trade as a whole. Necessary conditions for this are the active pursuit of a liberal trading policy on the part of the United States and a revival of trade across the Iron Curtain in Europe.

In my previous statement I showed that all our economic troubles were aggravated by the unhealthy monetary situation and that it is imperative to control inflation before we can hope to solve the problems of production and of the external deficit. The 1948 Budget marks an important advance in our fiscal policies, this being the first time that any Chancellor has deliberately aimed at a large surplus with the object primarily of countering inflation.

A Budget surplus achieved by reduced Government expenditure remains the Chancellor's weapon number one *par excellence;* there is another weapon of financial control in his armoury, which in our present situation he may well have to consider bringing into action. I refer to a moderate stiffening of interest rates. The object would, of course, be to place some restraint upon capital expenditure. This continues to be one of the chief sources of inflationary pressure.

Two main objections can be urged against recourse to higher interest rates as the means of curbing the flow of investment. The first is that they would tend primarily to deter capital expenditure by private enterprise, whereas many people will feel that it is often the development projects of public authorities, encouraged by ready access to capital at extremely low rates of interest, that ought rather to be postponed.

The second objection, that higher interest rates throw a burden on the Budget, is easily exaggerated. We are postulating that a rise in rates may be needed as a safeguard against further inflation. This is the same thing as saying that if interest rates are not allowed to rise the cost of all other items of Government expenditure will tend to increase. It would thus be wrong to regard every addition to the national debt charge due to higher rates as a net burden on the Budget. Moreover, the immediate cost to the Treasury would actually be small. In thinking of interest rate as a curb on inflation, one of the rates chiefly in question is the yield on gilt-edged, and this affects the cost of new borrowing only as the outstanding securities reach maturity.

Whether the rates on Treasury bills and other short-term Government debt need also rise may be arguable; but the cost of a half per cent. rise in such rates would in any case be only of the order of a penny or so on the income tax, as compared, for example, with over a shilling for the first nine months of the new health service.

From the national point of view, if the benefit of higher interest rates is agreed their minor disadvantages would be a small price to pay for their help in warding off any threat of renewed inflation. Moreover, higher interest rates undeniably offer one great advantage of a positive kind as a stimulus to private saving, which is suffering at present from such grievous discouragements.

To help to secure disinflation the time may well have come to make use of the sole remaining financial weapon of higher interest rates.

WESTMINSTER BANK LIMITED.

Tangible National Progress.

The Hon. Rupert E. Beckett on the Communism Factor.

The Statement by the Hon. Rupert E. Beckett, Chairman of Westminster Bank Limited, has been circulated to shareholders with the Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st December, 1948, which will be presented at the Annual Ordinary General Meeting at the Head Office on Wednesday, 16th February. The following is a summary of the Statement:—

Our Current Account and Deposit balances show an increase on the year of some £45½ million. This increase has been directed into various channels, including Advances, which are up by £16½ million. Increases in deposits and advances give concern to the Treasury Authorities, owing to their inflationary effect, but I am of opinion that the Banks have not been guilty of stimulating this effect by making advances which may be regarded as outside the strict requirements of trade and industry. The year's working of the Bank has resulted in a profit of £1,431,532, an increase on the previous year of £40,456 and it is proposed to deal with this sum as disclosed in the Directors' Report. The Ulster Bank, our Affiliate in Ireland, and the Westminster Foreign Bank, both continue to make satisfactory progress.

BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEM.

In the wider field of national affairs, the problem of the balance of payments is still the main difficulty confronting this country. It is gratifying to be able to record, therefore, that some tangible progress was made in this direction during the past year. It looks as though our deficit on current trading for 1948 may be some £200-£250 million, which would indicate a substantial improvement when compared with £630 million in 1947. These figures, however, conceal the extent of our trading deficit with the Western Hemisphere, which is our chief problem. Although, here, too, there has been a marked improvement, a further reduction of the deficit is still a main objective, in view of the vital need to conserve our gold and dollar resources. It is satisfactory that the drain on these resources has now been reduced to a point at which it is roughly balanced by Marshall aid.

While the volume of our imports last year remained at about 80 per cent. of the pre-war level, exports were expected to reach 136 per cent. of pre-war level, compared with 109 per cent. in 1947. A welcome feature was the recovery shown in invisible earnings. We are still, however, only at the beginning of our task. Somehow we have to close the gap in our balance of payments. Within the next four years we have to free our economy from the need for gratuitous aid from outside and establish by our own efforts an adequate standard of living.

RE-DEPLOYMENT OF LABOUR.

In order to bring about the re-deployment of labour, so essential to further progress, the Government have relied during 1948 on the policy of "disinflation." The intention was that by reducing the amount of money which the public had to spend on consumer goods some of the labour employed in their production would be released for more essential work. But the Government have not pressed their policy very far, and it is disappointing that more positive results have not yet appeared.

As regards the second great problem—how to increase the total volume of production—certain advantages, such as an increase in the total of the labour force and larger stocks, helped in the recent past in producing good results, but these advantages are unlikely to recur. The problem appears now as one of increasing output per man-hour or per man-year. We may tackle the problem of the productivity of labour along three lines: we may call for a greater personal effort from the individual worker; we may look to management for improved organisation; and we may rely upon mechanical aid to strengthen the worker's arm.

As regards the first of these, many are doing a fine job of work in accordance with the best traditions of the British worker, but there are many who still fail to realise the gravity of the country's plight and how directly the outcome of the struggle depends upon their individual efforts. Spectacular results are claimed for improved organisation in some factories. Such cases may be exceptional, but they suggest that there is considerable scope for further action along these lines. It is generally agreed that a good deal of re-equipment of industry is needed, and that we cannot do all we should like to do in this respect. The limit is set by the quantity of resources we are prepared to divert from present consumption to capital formation. The proper source of finance for capital development is the voluntary saving of private persons and business firms, but such saving is made difficult, and in many cases impossible, by the weight and incidence of taxation.

DEVELOPMENTS UNDER E.R.P.

We now have before us programmes of development for the period covered by American aid under the European Recovery Programme. The United Kingdom has prepared three programmes: for 1948-49, for 1949-50, and for the four years to mid-1952. Of these, the four-year programme attracts the greatest interest, since it points the way to the time when it is hoped that the country will stand on its own feet. It is not a plan or forecast but simply a broad statement of aims, and it still has to be fitted in with the programmes of the other eighteen participating countries, to make one harmonious plan.

The programme confirms much of what I have said. It stresses the paramount need for greatly expanded production, and sets production target-figures for all the major industries. In a number of cases—for example, in coal mining and in agriculture—these appear to have been pitched very high. The objective for exports, planned to rise from the current 136 per cent. of the 1938 volume, to 150 per cent. in the final year of the plan, appears more feasible.

The programme lays down admirable general principles, but there is little in it to indicate how they will be applied. How, for instance, is the necessary re-deployment of labour to be accomplished, and how, with initiative stifled and incentive lacking, is a powerful new stimulus to production to be imparted? The Government now has the plain duty of producing positive and effective plans for the carrying out of what is, at present, but a paper programme.

DANGERS OF COMMUNISM.

If we had only economic problems to solve we should, as we see, have difficulties enough to face. Unfortunately, there is a factor of a different sort which, if not checked, could completely frustrate our efforts. If heavy expenditure on rearmament were thrust upon us, all our plans would have to be recast, and our recovery would be retarded indefinitely. There has probably never been a period in recent history when the world had more to gain in the economic field from peace between the nations than it has to-day—peace, that is, not only in the sense of the absence of actual hostilities, but peace also in the sense of freedom from the anxieties which make necessary defensive precautions. If we must take such precautions we will take them; but they would represent a grievous addition to the claims which compete for our limited resources.

The present lamentable differences between East and West are not confined to the economic sphere. If Communism were no more than an alternative form of economic organisation to our own we might agree to differ. But it is more than that. It is a threat to the whole Western tradition of freedom and democracy. Not for the first time in the present century, economic advantages, genuine or spurious, have been proffered as a justification for the delivery of all power into the hands of a favoured party. But this time there is a new menace. An essential feature of Communism is the obligation it lays upon its adherents to spread its doctrines abroad.

There can be no doubt that many recent industrial disputes, in which Trade Union members have frequently revolted against their own accredited representatives, have been aggravated, if not provoked, by interference of this sort. The influence of Communism has made itself felt even among those who are now servants of the State, in the nationalised industries. The dangers of such a development need no emphasis. The workers should take warning. They should not allow themselves to be deceived by the propagandists of a cause which employs any deception that procures its advancement.

We enter 1949 encouraged by the progress we have made and with a clearer idea of the nature and magnitude of the task before us. That task will call for greater efforts than we have yet put forth.